

A Study of the Influential Levers used by The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom to  
Secure Local Centre Outcomes in Conurbations Consistent with its Mission and Objectives

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## **ABSTRACT**

Churches face management challenges comparable with those in secular organizations, but with additional dimensions that include the primacy of religious purpose and an inherent concern that excessive managerial focus may inhibit this purpose. This research examined the influential levers – essentially, factors fully or partially within the control of leaders or managers at each level – used in the Salvation Army’s United Kingdom operations to help achieve local outcomes in accordance with its overall mission and objectives.

Adopting a primarily phenomenological approach, the research used questionnaire surveys, semi-structured interviews and secondary statistical data to examine views and results at local, divisional and territorial levels, and to assess their implications. Primary data sources consisted of 23 local leaders and managers, 13 local volunteers or employees, 13 divisional or territorial officials, and 4 divisional commanders.

The research confirmed the validity and relevance of the concept and (with minor qualifications) its posited components. Leadership was of particular importance, as was an internal spiritual climate.

The research is expected to be of direct value to the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom, and potentially to the Salvation Army elsewhere. The concept of influential levers may also have indicative value to churches and other charities – particularly those with locally devolved activities – and to organizations generally.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Janetta, for her unfailing love, patience and support throughout the life of the research project.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks are due to my original and current sponsors from the Salvation Army – the late Lieutenant-Colonel Keith Burridge, and Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Barr; to the unfailing support and encouragement throughout of Major, now Lieutenant-Colonel, Ivor Telfer; to successive Directors of Research and Development of the Territory – Garry Smith, Dr Mike Emberson, and Mitch Menagh; and to the invaluable support of Fleur Bragaglia in connection with secondary data from the Territory.

I also owe sincere thanks to the academic and administrative staff of Edinburgh Business School, including my original mentors, Dr Ian Jones and Dr William Wallace; but especially to my supervisor, Dr Iain Henderson, and to Professor Alex Scott, who have been invaluable sources of encouragement and counsel.

The Salvation Army's Doctoral Support Network – chaired by Dr Helen Cameron – has been a helpful source of encouragement and criticism.

I am particularly grateful to the officers, managers, employees and local members of the Salvation Army who have made the research project possible by completing questionnaires and participating in interviews. Their involvement was critical, and my hope is that its results will support them and their colleagues in addressing the Territory's mission.

# ACADEMIC REGISTRY

## Research Thesis Submission



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Version: <i>(i.e. First, Resubmission, Final)</i>	Final	Degree Sought (Award <b>and</b> Subject area)	Doctor of Business Administration, Strategic Focus

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## GLOSSARY



(Some of the definitions given here are based on those in The Salvation Army, 2010b, p.14-15, but with amendments where appropriate to suit the current purpose)

**Adherent** – a member of the Salvation Army who has adopted the Salvation Army as his/her church, but who has not committed to the full requirements of soldiership

**Centre** – a unit of the Salvation Army existing to provide some form of social activity, rather than to be a local church

**Chief Secretary** – the second-in-command of a territory, reporting to the Territorial Commander

**Conurbation** – for the purposes of this research, initially defined as a contiguous urban location (usually related to a major town or city with a population of at least 100,000), where a number of Salvation Army corps or centres have catchment areas that potentially overlap or interrelate, and where there may be potential advantage in coordinating strategy and operations between themselves

**Commanding Officer** – the individual responsible for the activities and results of a Corps

**Corps** – the local church of the Salvation Army

**Division** – an operational and administrative unit, led by a Divisional Commander, consisting of all the corps in a particular geographic area, and possibly also some other Salvation Army centres

**General** – the officer (London-based), elected by senior officers from other top-level ordained officers, who commands the Salvation Army worldwide

**Influential levers** – “those activities, processes or mechanisms that enable the management of a nonprofit organization to influence or control local decisions and activities to ensure optimal congruence with central policies and seek outcomes that support the attainment of overall organizational goals.”

**Local Officer** – a lay member of the congregation of a Corps, holding a specific post, which may for example be administrative (eg Treasurer), musical (eg Bandmaster), or pastoral (eg Welcome Sergeant)

**Mission** – The purpose of the United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland, summarized in the term “to Save Souls, Grow Saints, and Serve Suffering Humanity.”

**Mission Outcome** – the achievement (however measured) of the Territory’s mission

**Officer** – a full-time ordained minister of the Salvation Army

**Soldier** – an adult member of the Salvation Army who has committed to its requirements for full membership

**Strategic planning** – the establishment of strategy through a formal process, whether generically organization-wide or specific to a particular unit, time or situation

**Territorial Commander** – the official responsible for all the Salvation Army’s activities in a particular geographical territory, in this case the United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland

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## **CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research examines selected aspects of the Salvation Army's United Kingdom operations, which organizationally are conducted by the United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland.

The research investigates what managerial factors can be used by leaders at each level – from the local corps (church) or social centre up to Territorial Headquarters – to help achieve success in its mission activities; and conversely what factors leaders can expect to be the subject of support and assistance from their line superiors. The essence is a focus on factors that are substantially under the control of individuals.

To achieve this intention, a new concept of “influential levers” was conceived, applied and assessed.

### **1.2 Research question, aims and objectives**

The research addressed the following initial research question:

“What influential levers are used by Territorial, Divisional and local leaders of the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland Territory to increase the degree of alignment of outcomes in conurbations with the overall Territorial mission, and to what extent is their employment successful?”

The aims of the research were defined as:

“To examine the influential levers used by Territorial, Divisional and local leaders of the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland Territory to

increase the degree of alignment of outcomes in conurbations with the overall Territorial mission;

“to assess the actual and relative impact of such levers; and to assess how far they assist local centres to attain results in accordance with the Territorial mission and to respond successfully to external factors that may impact upon outcomes.”

In turn, this led to the following objectives:

1. “To identify and examine relevant influential levers
2. “To assess how far the use of such levers is effective in attaining results in accordance with the Territorial mission
3. “To assess how far the use of such levers is effective in responding successfully to external factors that may impact upon local outcomes.”

Section 10.3.3 summarises the degree to which these aims and objectives were successfully addressed.

Brief definitions of key elements of the Salvation Army’s terminology, as used in this and other Chapters, may be found in the Glossary.

### **1.3 Relevance of conurbations**

Whilst many similar issues apply to corps in both urban and rural environments, conurbations present some distinctive aspects. In particular, they may offer opportunities to share resources or to allocate specific activities, without necessarily abandoning core activities in each location.

As the thesis reveals, practical problems arose in segregating conurbations; consequently, the research focused on the general use of influential levers, though the issue of conurbations and other geographical groupings is also considered.

#### **1.4 Importance of influential levers**

Influential levers are defined in this research as “those activities, processes or mechanisms that enable the management of a nonprofit organization to influence or control local decisions and activities to ensure optimal congruence with central policies and seek outcomes that support the attainment of overall organizational goals.”

Although a provisional list of levers was compiled after reference to the literature, this was varied in the light of the developing research, as explained in Section 4.3.

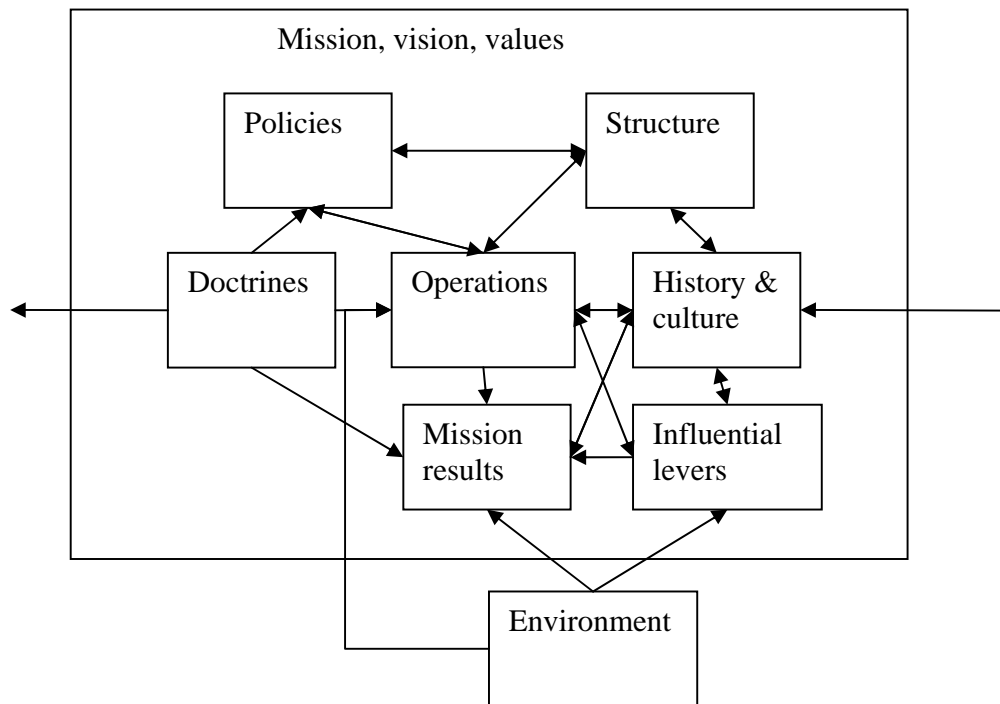
The Salvation Army adopted a quasi-military organization and style in the late nineteenth-century, and, although this has become more relaxed in modern times some implications remain, and may be hard to reconcile with a predominantly lay membership and a modern attitude to direction and authority. This means that influential levers may have a distinctive role to play within the hierarchical command processes, whilst at the same time possibly being more difficult to exercise effectively.

The essence of this research was to examine such factors and their collective impact on local outcomes and on the way in which such outcomes are achieved.

Figure 1.1 provides an initial schematic designed by the researcher to show the place of influential levers in the conversion of the Territory’s mission, vision and values into mission results.

Whilst simplistic, the schematic illustrates that the influential levers are influenced by the history, the culture, the environment and the structure, but themselves interact both with operations and with mission results; and in the longer run, particularly, will also impact on culture and history. The schematic does not distinguish between

organizational levels, as a critical feature of influential levers is that they operate at every level. Wherever there is a leader or a manager, some of the influential levers will be available.



**Figure 1.1 – Influences on mission results**

Some components of the schematic (for example, structure and doctrines) were beyond the planned scope. Those aspects of the schematic of greatest direct relevance to the research were subsequently developed and expanded by the researcher in the light of the research into Figure 9.2.

### 1.5 Accessibility

The research was sponsored (though not financially supported) by the Territory's Secretary for Programme, one of a Cabinet of senior officials reporting to the Territorial Commander. A copy of the letter of support is included as Appendix A. The

incumbent changed during the period of the research, but the support continued. The research also benefitted from the consistent support of members of the Territorial Headquarters, who in particular supported efforts to recruit respondents, and to provide access to some internal information. However, the Salvation Army does not have responsibility for any of the views expressed in the thesis.

An important feature of this research is that its aim of including input from as many organizational levels as possible necessitated the involvement of Divisional Commanders, who therefore became “gatekeepers” in allowing accessibility. This provided valuable benefits, but also became a significant constraint.

## **1.6 Research ethics**

Individual participation in the research was optional. Confidentiality was important, and appropriate assurances were given. The methodology had to be transparently capable of protecting individuals.

The researcher has had a lifetime of involvement with the Salvation Army, so it was important to retain and to be able to demonstrate objectivity. When the research was first discussed, the post of Director of Research and Development (the successive incumbents of which have subsequently been amongst the main working contacts for the research) was a relative of the researcher. This was, however, disclosed both to the Salvation Army and to the Edinburgh Business School; and in fact the individual resigned in 2006 to work for another organization. The researcher also recognized that some participants in the research might be personally known to him, but this was expected to be rare, and was not expected to create practical or ethical problems; this proved to be the case.

The research had inherent sensitivities in touching upon the personal beliefs of individuals; the intention was, however, to be aware of the potential impact of such sensitivities upon the research topic, but not to challenge those beliefs.



## **1.7 Potential value of the research**

The potential value of the research was carefully considered before it began. Its primary value is its provision of a unique and practical set of insights into the management challenges and practices of a distinctive religious organization which is also one of the UK's largest social services providers.

Additionally, by providing empirical evidence of the relationship between the key levers for direction and securing acceptable mission outcomes in an important segment of this specific organization, it contributes to the wider understanding of how disciplines historically applied primarily to business activity can assist in achieving the mission of a church or other charity with devolved operational activities.

The willingness of top management within the Territory to sponsor the research and to receive its outcomes demonstrates their own belief in its potential contribution to knowledge. The consistent view of interview respondents was that this independent research would be of value, provided that the Territory took advantage of it. Thus for the Salvation Army itself the research shows usable insights into management and administration in a context where spiritual issues are seen as having primacy, including an examination of potential conflicts.

The outcome of the research is therefore considered to be of direct value to the Territory, in helping understand how central policies may most successfully be implemented; it also sheds guidance on other aspects of governance. By analogy, the research may also be of indicative value in other Salvation Army territories.

It may also be useful to other charities which employ a distributed line organization with some degree of devolved responsibility for planning and implementation. Additionally, the methodology used, issues encountered, and suggestions for future research may be of value to those researching in comparable fields in future.

## **1.8 Format of the thesis**

After this introductory Chapter, Chapter 2 provides background information on the Salvation Army, particularly the United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland. Chapter 3 examines the relevant academic and other literature (though relevant literature is also cited in other Chapters), and Chapter 4 outlines the methodology for addressing the research question. Chapter 5 explains the pilot study. Chapter 6 outlines the main study and its data collection, and consolidates it with the pilot study. Chapter 7 examines the data analysis, leading to the results. Chapter 8 provides a reappraisal of the literature and formulates the research theory, followed by Chapter 9, which discusses the results of the research, and their implications. Chapter 10 summarizes the conclusions of the research against its original objectives, considers its contribution to the knowledge base, and indicates areas which future research might usefully address.

After the References and Bibliography section, the Appendices contain the Letter of Support from the Salvation Army, and specimens of key research instruments, correspondence, and analysis pro formas.

## **CHAPTER 2 – A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE SALVATION ARMY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This Chapter provides a brief view of the Salvation Army, as a background to the thesis, to illustrate the context within which influential levers are used.

The content derives primarily from matters of general knowledge and currency within the organization; the assessment of recent changes is subjective by the researcher, but indicates issues considered to be of particular relevance.

The Salvation Army retains a strong and distinctive culture, rooted in its founders, its origins, and its early history, that continues to impact on the attitudes and activities of the organization and of many individual members. This is discussed more fully in Section 3.5. Its current practices and policies should be seen in this context.

### **2.2 Nomenclature**

The correct name of the organization is “The Salvation Army”. However, general practice (adopted and justified, for example, by Hattersley (1999)) is not normally to capitalise the initial letter of the first word. This may facilitate reading, and has been adopted throughout this thesis, except for formal references.

The correct name of the Territory within which this research took place is the “United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland”. In fact, sample and logistical constraints did not allow either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland to be included, and the contracted title “the Territory” is usually used here instead, referring specifically to its United Kingdom activities.

### **2.3 Internal constraints and operational environment**

The Territory's ability to carry out its activities is inevitably affected by its internal constraints and by its operational environment. The major influences are assessed by the researcher as:

- The Territory's religious purposes are predominant
- It is bound by certain international organizational constraints and regulations, although considerable local autonomy exists
- Some principles or practices are strongly culturally entrenched, and changes would be difficult and significantly risk-bearing
- Numbers of officers are limited
- Membership has been falling for many years
- Religious belief and commitment in the United Kingdom is not generally strong
- Individual members' allocation of time is increasingly challenged by greater work and family commitments, and sometimes by a reluctance to forego secular activities
- Social challenges appear to be increasing, and social support activities can become more demanding
- Competitive tendering for national or local funding for social activity poses practical problems.

Against these challenges, the Territory also has some particular strengths and advantages, beyond those enjoyed by many churches:

- The Salvation Army's public reputation is high, at both national and local levels
- Its officers are highly committed, via a covenant that gives the Territory very high flexibility in their deployment and appointments
- Music is a strength, and may have some value in retaining membership

## **2.4 Mode of worship and doctrines**

The Salvation Army developed over the years a form of worship with much in common with other nonconformist churches, but reflecting also its distinctive approach and style, including emphasizing musical participation, personal witness, and open-air activity.

The Salvation Army's doctrines consist of eleven "Articles of Faith", all with Methodist overtones, even the most recent dating back as far as 1876. Except for "slight editorial modifications, chiefly in punctuation" (The Salvation Army (2010a), p.xviii), they are listed in The Salvation Army Act, 1980.

## **2.5 Current structure and governance**

### ***2.5.1 Formal and informal mission statements***

The formal purpose of the Salvation Army can be derived from its International Mission Statement (The Salvation Army (2010b), frontispiece):

"The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

"Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by love for God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in his name without discrimination."

Under Section 3 of The Salvation Army Act 1980, its objects are (p.3) "the advancement of the Christian religion . . . and pursuant thereto, the advancement of education, the relief of poverty, and other charitable objects beneficial to society or the community of mankind as a whole".

Gowans, who led the Salvation Army from 1999-2002, summarized its mission succinctly in an informal mission statement as “to Save Souls, Grow Saints, and Serve Suffering Humanity.” These three elements became widely quoted within the Salvation Army, and were formally adopted as the Territory’s Mission Statement.

### ***2.5.2 Constitution***

The principal governing document is now The Salvation Army Act 1980. Its main provisions included

- creating the post of General of The Salvation Army as a legal corporation sole
- enabling The Salvation Army to amend its own constitution, without the need for further private Acts of Parliament.

The United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland was established in 1990.

### ***2.5.3 International Governance***

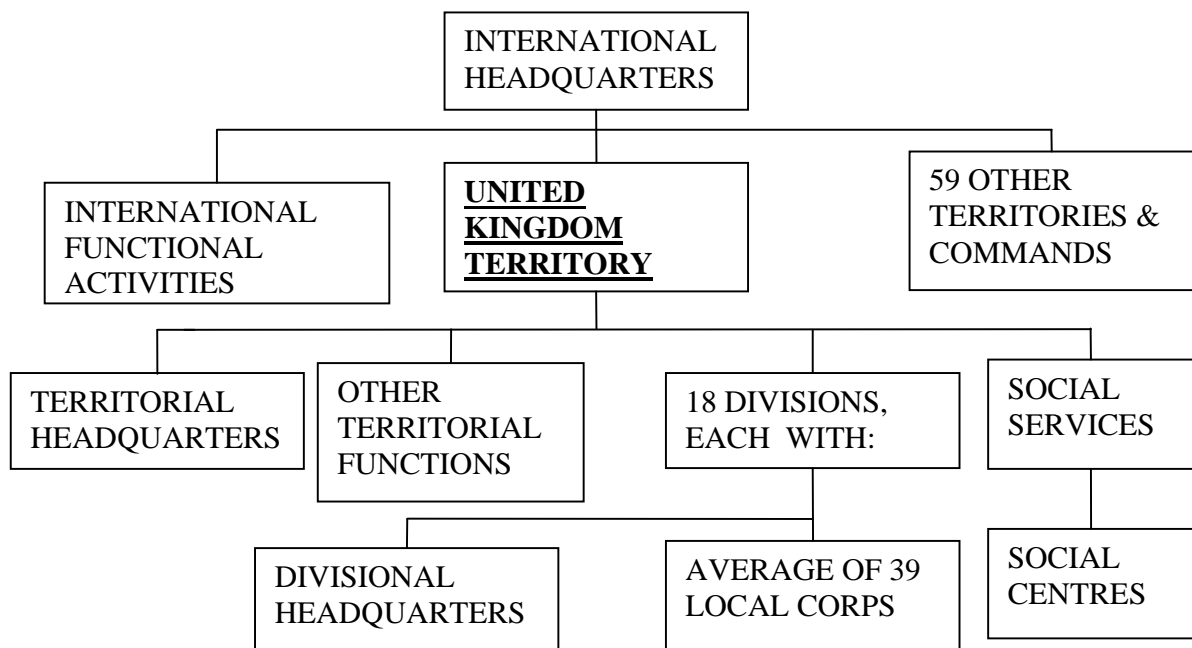
The Salvation Army worldwide is governed by a General, who is not normally responsible to any board, though a quorum of senior officials may convene a High Council to remove a General; this has only happened once, on the grounds of ill health. The General does however have two consultative and advisory bodies (The Salvation Army (2010b)).

Governance of the Salvation Army has always been complex given its operations in most countries of the world, and a major constitutional crisis in 1929 (covered in many texts, but authoritatively in Larsson (2009)) demonstrated how sensitive an issue governance can be. Various changes in governance and structure have taken place, but the most significant for the United Kingdom was the creation of the Territory in 1990, using powers of delegation to the General created by The Salvation Army Act 1980 (Larsson (2009)). This addressed an anomaly, whereby as a result of the Salvation

Army's United Kingdom origins its local governance and administration had been partially intermingled with their international counterparts.

The Salvation Army is now predominantly non-United-Kingdom. It operates in 121 countries and territories, using 175 languages; has 15,422 corps and similar units, in addition to its specifically social service operations; and has 17,145 active officers, 104,248 employees, 1,124,760 senior (ie adult soldiers), and 181,398 adherents (The Salvation Army (2010b)). Generally, the same principles of membership apply internationally, but with local variations. Individual territories have significant practical autonomy.

A simplified organogram of the composition of the Territory and of its position in the overall Salvation Army structure is shown in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1 - Simplified organogram of Territory structure and positioning**

#### ***2.5.4 The Salvation Army in the Territory***

The Territory includes 696 corps and other local churches, structured into 18 Divisions; it also has 115 social centres, in addition to 24 clubs and 11 mobile units serving the UK's armed service personnel (The Salvation Army, 2010b). It deploys 1,223 ordained full-time officers, 5,262 employees, 30,902 soldiers (full lay members), 9,469 adherents, and 4,464 junior soldiers (The Salvation Army, 2010b). The Territory is directed by its Territorial Commander, supported by a Cabinet of senior officers.

Divisional Commanders report to the Chief Secretary (the Territorial Commander's deputy) and have a staff usually consisting of a combination of officers and lay employees (who need not be Salvationists). The Divisional Commander is responsible for the church (corps) structure; responsibility for homeless centres was centralized in 2011.

When looking at overall statistics, numerical success elsewhere may mask the position in the Territory, where membership has been declining for many years. Yuill (2003) mentions a soldiery of 120,000 for the United Kingdom in the mid-twentieth century, reduced to some 38,000 by the time he writes. Hill (2006) examines the background, including (p.294) a direct quotation from Escott (1996) stating that growth in Britain:

“ . . . tailed off around 1890 . . . Though some growth continued until the mid-1930s it was slow. Since that point there has been almost constant decline.”

Escott (p.337) further describes the situation dramatically:

“The Salvation Army is facing the most severe test in its history since its earliest days; the issue is now survival, since a simple projection of the rate of change indicates that the losses will be terminal at some point from 2035 (depending on the projection formula employed).”

Soldiery numbers ceased to be published in the 1890s, and were not revealed again until 1995 (Hill (2006)). Statistics in Chapter 7 show that the decline continues.



The numerical significance of the Territory must also be viewed in the overall Salvation Army context – for example, against its 30,902 soldiers, there are 52,112 in predominantly-Muslim Pakistan, and no less than 184,372 in Kenya. (The Salvation Army (2010b)).

The Territory operates mainly through two trust funds – The Salvation Army Trust and The Salvation Army Social Work Trust – with a combined income of £230 million for the year to 31 March 2010 (The Salvation Army (2011)).

The corps is the local church of the Salvation Army, and centres on worship activities, although in line with the organization's traditions, extensive local social activities are often provided from it. A typical corps has either one or two officers (full-time ordained officials); where two, this is usually because they are husband and wife. There is also usually a team of local officers (mainly lay Salvationists). Many corps are too small for all leadership roles to be filled, and not all corps have an officer; in the latter case, leadership is provided in various ways – by the local officers, by retired officers or other volunteers, by support from a larger corps nearby, or by visiting officers.

Some decisions are reserved for the Divisional Commander or Territorial Headquarters, but the officer in charge of a corps has considerable discretion. Most corps activities are provided by volunteers and the officers, but some corps employ full- or part-time staff to undertake resource management, social service or other roles.

The Territory provides extensive social services, and receives local or national funding towards many such activities. In some cases, the Territory bids against other potential suppliers for local authority contracts to provide social services; this raises practical and strategic issues.

## **2.6 Changes in the Territory in recent years**

### ***2.6.1 Selection of topics for this section***

Many changes have taken place within the Territory over recent years. Those described below are seen by the researcher as particularly significant, particularly relevant to the research, or both.

### ***2.6.2 Adherents***

Essentially the term refers to individuals who have a personal belief in God, and regard the Salvation Army as their spiritual home, but who have not accepted the full responsibilities and declarations of soldiership. Adherents have become a significant minority in the Territory, though fears may exist of watering-down soldiership.

### ***2.6.3 Worship style and meeting frequency***

The Salvation Army's worship style has historically been distinctive. In recent years, however, there has been increased freedom to vary local activities to suit local needs, including responding to changes in the ethnic composition of a particular congregation, or other demographic preferences. One consequence has been greater flexibility in timings and frequency of meetings (ie services); usually this means fewer meetings compared with past decades, particularly open-air meetings.

### ***2.6.4 Attendance requirements, disciplinary attitudes, and freedom of debate***

The Salvation Army retains demanding regulations for soldiership, but some relaxation has occurred over the years – for example, Salvationist musicians may now play in non-Salvation Army bands or ensembles provided that Salvation Army service does not suffer.

The nature of debate allowed – and possibly encouraged – has also widened. The correspondence columns of the principal UK periodical for Salvationists – the weekly *Salvationist* – include active and occasionally vigorous (though always polite) debate on a variety of issues. Although the Salvation Army's principles are defended editorially (and by many correspondents), there is some genuine discussion on controversial issues.

### **2.6.5 Officers**

The number of officers (ie full-time clergy) and of candidates for officership has fallen, over many years. There are currently 60 cadets undergoing two-year officer training, with another 19 doing so by distance learning. The number of retired officers (65 being the normal retirement age) now exceeds that of active ones (1,478 against 1,223) (The Salvation Army (2010b)).

Historically, recruitment and retention of officers was impacted by the requirement that officers could only be married to other officers. Recent years have seen significant relaxations in these rules. Additionally, use is made of those who volunteer for a quasi-officer role, whilst remaining in normal employment, and some retired officers voluntarily take on the responsibility of running a corps for which an active officer is not available.

## **2.7 Where next?**

In some countries the Salvation Army is thriving; in others (including the Territory) membership has been declining for years. Major challenges for the Territorial leadership therefore include reversing the long-standing decline in the number of officers, members and corps, and increasing the Territory's effectiveness in achieving its mission.

## **CHAPTER 3 – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This Chapter reviews the literature relevant to the research.

As is introduced briefly in Sections 1.1 and 1.4, influential levers are the managerial factors substantially under the control of an individual leader which can assist his or her team in attaining mission results; or, conversely, what an organizational member at any level can expect from his or her line superior to the same end. As will be examined in Section 3.2, there is a significant link with the concept of management control, but coupled with a recognition of positive as well as potentially restrictive elements. Whilst the individual levers are already well established concepts, bringing them together in this way is seen as a fresh way to assess their possibilities, and the ultimate aim is to empower the leader and support mission success.

Section 3.2 examines literature relevant to the nature of influential levers, followed by Sections 3.3 and 3.4 which examine relevant Salvation Army literature (except on methodology, dealt with in Chapter 4). Sections 3.5 to 3.8 examine the organizational context within which the levers operate, looking at external literature but with specific reference to the Salvation Army. Against this background, Section 3.9 considers each of the influential levers separately, Section 3.10 synthesizes the review, and Section 3.11 summarizes the approach used. Some overlap between the Sections is inevitable.

The content of this Chapter reflects the nature of the research, covering an untypically wide range of significant management topics. Individual coverage of the literature on each topic is therefore less than would be appropriate in a research project focusing only on a subset of a single topic.

Although there are overlaps, this Chapter does not review the relevant literature on research methodology, which appears in Chapter 4.

### 3.2 Concept of influential levers

The term “influential levers” might initially appear as a near-synonym for the mechanisms used for management control, or even strategic control. Berry, Broadbent and Otley (2005) provide a critical overview of approaches to management control. Anthony and Young (2003) – specifically focussing on nonprofits – explain the concept of management control (p.4):

“*Management control* [Authors’ italics] sits between strategy formulation and task control. Management control accepts the goals and strategies determined in the strategy formulation process as given. It focuses on the implementation of the strategies and the attainment of the goals. As such, management control attempts to assure that the organization designs effective programs and implements them efficiently.”

They go on to describe the “formal management control process” (p.18) including strategic planning as one of its four principal phases, but interpreting strategic planning as involving choices of major programs “made within the context of the goals and strategies that emerged from the strategy formulation activity”. Thus “Strategy formulation and management control merge in the strategic planning (or programming) phase.”

Influential levers, as defined in this research, go beyond management control as thus explained, accepting wider influences on the achievement of results, for example leadership. Crucially, they also avoid any implication that the measures taken are necessarily restrictive; the potential positive value of influential levers – for example, of leadership – is fundamental.

De Wit & Meyer (2005) refer (p.205) to “levers of leadership influence”, which they see as three generic ways in which leaders can exercise influence, each based on a different point in the activities of those being led:

- Throughput control (on actions)
- Output control (through targets or objectives)
- Input control (factors affecting the actual work, before or during it).

Taking the three elements in the order expressed, De Wit & Meyer see the directness of influence as being in descending order, but the leverage as being in ascending order.

Grant (2010) suggests three mechanisms for overcoming the agency problem and achieving alignment of individuals with the organization’s goals - control mechanisms, performance incentives and shared values. He then translates this into four management systems for coordination and control – information systems, strategic planning systems, financial planning and control systems and human resource management systems – but adds the role that corporate culture can also play.

Grant’s taxonomy resonates with that of Simons (1995), who recognizes the wider interpretation of control, commenting (p.5) that “Control in organizations is achieved in many ways, ranging from direct surveillance to feedback systems to social and cultural controls.”, whilst he himself focuses mainly on informational control levers. He also distinguishes between diagnostic and interactive systems. Scheytt and Soin (2005), by contrast, stress cultural aspects of control, and the levers that can affect this.

Mintzberg (1994) examines strategic control, which he describes (p.357) as “an elusive one in the field of strategic management, much discussed but never really clarified.” A particular concern is that writers on the topic have unduly restricted its relevance to intended and deliberate strategies, failing to take account of strategies that were realized but unintended.

Relatively little literature has been identified on “levers” in the specific sense adopted for this study, recognizing the search for positive – or generative – influences as well as potentially restrictive ones.

Patel (2005) explains the concept of levers to control situations, by analogy with machines, stressing that no set of levers can be complete; and that relying excessively on a limited set may inhibit effective response to change. He lists (p.142) six internal elements (each with sub-elements that he regards as levers); these are an entity’s:

- leaders
- population
- physical assets
- capital
- information and intellectual assets
- belief system or culture.

He also defines seven key external elements:

- physical terrain
- information terrain
- political, regulatory and legal terrain
- military and security terrain
- cultural terrain
- financial systems terrain
- “other distinct entities”, varying from people to planets.

Importantly, Patel suggests that both internal and external levers must be used to create desired change. However, his approaches address strategy at multiple levels, including the nation or global organization; and whilst his internal elements are widely applicable, the external elements are arguably far more contingent. An organization such as the Territory may be partially able to affect its own environment; but in the current research – looking not just at the territorial and divisional level, but also at local leaders – Patel’s external elements remain unaddressed.

Grossman and Rangan (2001), examining tensions between central and local elements of multisite nonprofits, refer to “umbrella associations”, a term defined by Young (2001) as (p.290) “nonprofit associations whose members are themselves nonprofit organizations.” This definition might suggest that Grossman and Rangan’s research is not necessarily applicable to a nonprofit such as the Salvation Army, which consists rather of branches than of associated separate organizations or franchised associates. However, Young’s inclusion is wide, as (p.290) “National and international umbrella organizations use a variety of structures, ranging from loose associations and alliances to corporate hierarchies and partnerships”. The statistics that Young uses exclude religious organizations, but if the Salvation Army in the United States were included it might be seen as an “umbrella organization”, as by analogy might the Territory.

Grossman and Rangan, researching five organizations, identified a set of strategic levers for management action:

- brand name creation
- value enhancement
- expert assistance
- scale economies
- program customization (or standardization)
- resource localization (or centralization).

Comparison of these levers with others under consideration suggests that they may be of a different type, being not so much levers (in the sense adopted for the current study) as the results of levers being successfully used. On this basis, the influential levers for the current study may be seen as “first order”, whereas some of those cited by Grossman and Rangan are more appropriately viewed as “second order” levers. For example, using the levers of resource availability or budgetary processes (first order) could result in scale economies (second order) and resource localization or centralization (second order). Others – for example, expert assistance – could be



regarded as first-order, but might equally be second-order, in this case as a result of the use of management, resource availability or budgetary processes levers.

Grossman and Rangan cite the work of Oster (1996), who examines the implications of a need to rely on volunteers, quoting earlier work by Mueller and by Menchik and Weisbrod, as showing that volunteers' perception of their own influence on how the organization's outputs are generated and distributed is a major determining factor for their effort. Oster stresses that strong central control can impede such local influence, and favours the use of franchises. However, there is no realistic possibility that the Territory would adopt a franchise-type operation, and the direct usefulness of the current research depends rather on its providing insights into managing a branch-based national church.

Marginson (2002) looked specifically at the effects of management control systems on middle managers' formation of strategy, and showed (inter alia) that (p.1025):

“Whether intended or not, the way in which administrative controls are used appears to shape the nature and extent of individual contributions to a company's strategic agenda.”

This study of the literature has not revealed any existing concept or taxonomy of levers that would be fully appropriate for the current research, hence a fresh approach was needed for this thesis. Consequently, for this research “influential levers” were defined (see Section 1.4) as “those activities, processes or mechanisms that enable the management of a nonprofit organization to influence or control local decisions and activities to ensure optimal congruence with central policies and seek outcomes that support the attainment of overall organizational goals.” This definition requires that such levers are available for manipulation by central and subordinate leadership.

### **3.3 General pattern of Salvation Army literature**

A significant literature exists on the Salvation Army. The bibliography by Moyles (1988) uses 191 pages to cover the period from its original 1865 foundation to 1987. Much has also arisen subsequently.

Many biographical and historical accounts of the Salvation Army exist. Key sources include the official 8-volume history (Sandall and others, 1947-2000), and various biographies of William Booth (its founder), including Begbie (1920), and more recently Hattersley (2000), Bennett (2003), and Green (2005). Despite historical remoteness, they highlight aspects that still affect the organization's culture – including its hierarchical nature and the duality of religious and social conviction. They also illustrate the transition from a vigorous, fast-changing and pragmatic organization, to one of greater control, consistency and relative stability.

### **3.4 Relevant Salvation Army academic research and other literature**

Salvation Army academic literature is limited, particularly that directly relevant to the current research; much of the literature is relatively historic, frequently based on research topics outside the United Kingdom, and generally focusing on history, theology or music.

Despite geographical and organizational differences, some of this literature is germane to the current research. Whilst different territories have local leadership, all are led by the (international) General; there is a strong universal culture in the organization, tending to change slowly; and there are international leadership exchanges. Thus the dating or localizing of experience may be less prevalent or significant than in some other organizations.

No academic research into the Salvation Army has been traced on or near the specific topic of this proposal, though some research touches on strategy for specific areas; for

example, Rice (2000) examined strategic management of elderly care provision by the Salvation Army, and Escott (1996) examined the application within the Salvation Army of church growth theories. Additionally an unpublished research paper by Pallant (2007), examining the practices of Divisional Commanders, proved relevant to the current research. Jones (1983) examined sociologically some organizational aspects of a Salvation Army corps, but with limited substantive or methodological relevance to the current study. Both Escott (1996) and Pallant (2007) are significantly drawn upon in other Chapters of this thesis.

Hill (1985), examined the relationship between participation and effectiveness/efficiency, comparing contemporary decision making in the Salvation Army's Western Territory of the United States (classified as participative) with the traditional authoritarian style of the Salvation Army in its first century. Interestingly, he records of the program he describes (p.165) “. . . the human resource component of the organization has been frustrated by the transiency and temporariness of administrative commitment to member involvement in organizational determination.”

Green (1986) from a Divisional Commander's viewpoint sought (from title) “A strategy for revitalising ministry”. His final paragraph records that a planned outcome was to provide practical guidance for leaders in the division.

Looking at renewal and growth, Robinson (1987) focused on two named corps in Canada, emphasizing factors within local control. To some extent this mirrors the interest of the current research, but specifically excludes issues such as personnel aspects of officership, which is included within the current concept of influential levers. That thesis is very different from the current research in methodological approach, however.

Court (1994) has a different focus, looking at power and values in a comparative study of two organizations, one being the Canada and Bermuda Territory of the Salvation

Army, the other an (identity-disguised) education board, though shown as being similar in attributes such as budgets and number of employees.

Finally, Simpson (1998) examined visionary planning within the Salvation Army, with a sample that included international cases as well as those from the United States, based on documentation and questionnaire evidence.

### **3.5 Culture**

The literature contains extensive coverage of the impact of culture on organizations and their management, and on other factors affecting behaviour and outcomes; Morgan (1986), for example, shows the pervasiveness of corporate culture, and suggests its ability to shape organizations, whilst emphasizing the dangers of assuming that it can be directly managed. Other commentators include Peters and Waterman (1982) and Handy (1993).

Hindle (2006) recognizes the power and value of a strong culture, whilst also recognizing the danger of internal and external culture clashes, and the need to reconcile these with the benefits of cultural diversity.

The growing importance of culture in organizations is emphasized by Rao (2010), who studied over 1,000 reports from business students on what they sought from an employing company, and suggests the importance of a cause or mission superior to the company itself. This may be thought likely to apply even more strongly to nonprofits, and particularly so to the Salvation Army, with its reliance not only on volunteers but also on officers committed to a covenant involving sacrificial living.

Schein suggests (in Schein (1990) and Schein (2010)) that culture shows itself in three ways – observable artifacts (of which the Salvation Army is rich, including uniforms, a crest, flags, brass bands, songs, worship processes, and military terminology), espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions.

The Salvation Army has a distinctive culture, partially described in *The Salvation Army* (1994). Its context is strongly affected by its ultimate loyalty to religious objectives, rather than to any that are secular or even (in other respects) charitable, important though its charitable objectives are. One consequence is that individuals operating within the organization believe in divine guidance, and the importance of responding to it, though this does not preclude the possibility of erroneous perceptions of divine will, nor of different interpretations. Such religious factors are not unique to the Salvation Army. Indeed, non-religious factors may have equally significant impacts on the judgment of individuals in other contexts – for example, political ideologies or certain forms of patriotism or nationalism.

Schein (1990) suggests that (p.112):

“Deeply held assumptions often start out historically as values, but as they stand the test of time, gradually come to be taken for granted and then take on the character of assumptions. They are no longer questioned and they become less and less open to discussion . . . If one understands culture in this way, it becomes obvious why it is so difficult to change culture.”

This may partially explain why the history of the Salvation Army remains a marked influence on its culture. For example, as suggested in Section 1.4, the hierarchical structure and authoritative tradition may make influential levers both more important and harder to apply. Clifton (2010, Vol. 2) comments (pp.19-20):

“We were born out of a specific time and a specific culture in English history, but God has moved Salvationism on and outward through many generations and into countless cultures ever since.

“Even so, a sense of history and a working knowledge of our past are crucial to being a modern thinking Salvationist.”

Yuill (2003), a former Divisional Commander in the Territory explains how the hierarchical structure reinforced the shared culture and a consistency of operational model, but shows how that consistency reduced over the years, as bureaucratic control and total consistency became increasingly impractical.

The balance between organizational autocracy and democracy has always been present in the Salvation Army, perhaps most dramatically in its governance crisis of 1929 (Larsson (2009), Coutts (1994), Sandall & others (1947-2000), Watson (1965), Collier (1965)), but still today. Clifton comments (2010, Vol. 2, p.59-60): “Salvation Army systems of governance have never been purely democratic. They are probably more democratic today than they have been, but that’s still not saying a great deal.” He goes on to express a belief in the value of benevolent autocracy, but welcomes increased empowerment and the ownership of mission.

Schein (1990) draws attention to processes that affect culture, and which may tend to explain how the Salvation Army’s (and thus the Territory’s) culture has developed over time. He shows how the beliefs, values and assumptions of a founder or founders can provide a model that may be internalized by members, though over time what is not working may become visible, and (p.115) “The joint learning then gradually creates shared assumptions.”

A considerable literature exists on the influence that founders can exert on an organization, even after their departure from it; and although this literature predominantly focuses on businesses, it also includes evidence from nonprofits. Such influence is not restricted to culture, but it is convenient to examine it at this point. Nelson (2003) examined the effect of founders’ influence in relation to initial public offerings of businesses, and other commentators include Miller, Le Breton-Miller and Lester (2011), and Kelly, Athanassiou and Crittenden (2000). Block, Jaskiewicz and Miller (2011) separated family and founder ownership (which they found tended to enhance performance) and family and founder management (where results were less

clear), although their sample was limited to Standard & Poors 500 organizations. (“Ownership” clearly does not arise with nonprofits, although the early history of the Salvation Army shows some potentially quasi-proprietorial attitudes at times.) By contrast, Block and Rosenberg (2002) looked specifically at nonprofits, to assess whether (p.353) “founders use their position to influence organizational direction”.

In the case of the Salvation Army, the founder’s attitude might be summarised by one respondent in the current research, who quoted a saying that the founder liked rule by committee – a committee of one, where he was chairman. But William Booth died 100 years ago, although one of his sons led the organization for another 17 years, and (after a five year gap) one of the founder’s daughters led it for a further five years. Their influence is therefore much more remote in time, but could be argued as having retained some potency throughout the subsequent period. Many dominant features of the organization – for example, its doctrines, its hierarchical structure, and its military metaphor – date back to the days of the founder, albeit that some aspects have changed, particularly in more recent years.

An interesting – though not entirely close - analogy to the organization’s hierarchical structure may be found in Goold & Campbell (1987). Their focus is on the role of the centre in diversified organizations, rather than the relationship between the centre and branches (or in this case centre and corps/centres) of a single entity. Nevertheless, their classification of the three most common control styles is interesting – strategic planning, strategic control and financial control. In broad terms, in strategic planning, the centre plays a major role in proposing direction; in financial control, strategy is delegated, subject to required criteria for results; and strategic control lies between the two, to balance sufficient autonomy with sufficient synergy. The current research shows evidence that, so far as corps are concerned, the Territory has impliedly adopted a policy analogous to strategic control, but not necessarily with a commensurate degree and process of accountability.

### **3.6 Mission, vision, values and similar concepts, in context of the Territory**

#### ***3.6.1 Adoption by churches of managerial concepts***

An important development over recent years has been the adoption by many churches of tools, terminologies, practices and attitudes from the business field. Hybels & Mittelberg (2006) state (p.8): “It’s not hard to see that both the problems and the solutions of the business world have close cousins within the Christian community.” Some of the literature not only encourages the cross-over, but provides active guidance and materials; for example Babbes & Zigarelli (2006) cover such topics as the product life cycle, value chains, market segmentation, brand equity and the balanced scorecard, all in a church context.

However, this trend has encountered reservations. For example, Gilley ((2005) and (2006)) expresses concerns about churches which in adopting a market-led approach lose sight of Biblical teaching.

Cameron (2004) suggests (p.139) that “significant barriers” exist to the use of organizational studies in a church environment. She also offers advice (p.148) on reviewing literature in this context “A keen eye for the disciplinary base of the author and their assumptions about organizations and management are vital.” This provides a salutary reminder.

Within the Salvation Army, Pallant (2007) is amongst those with concerns on both the language and the impact of managerialism.

Kay (2006), setting out an overview of strategy, states (p.157) that: “What matters today are mission and vision.” An extensive literature exists covering or touching upon some or all of mission, vision and values, and their significance to an organization, including Cummings (2003), Drucker (1993b), Drucker (2001), Duggan (2003), Grant (2010), Hamermesh (1996), Rhodes (2003), Swarder (2003), Beer (2009), Weinstein (2003),



Mintzberg (1994), Faulkner & Campbell (2003a), Faulkner & Campbell (2003b), Bowman and Faulkner (1997), and Angwin, Cummings & Smith (2007).

The application of some or all these concepts to nonprofits is included in Drucker (1992), Hudson (2003), Hudson (2009), Oster (1995), and Handy (1990). Specifically, there is significant literature support for the use of mission, objectives and similar concepts in the context of the Christian church. Callahan (1983) entitles his first chapter “Specific, Concrete, Missional Objectives”. Cameron (2010) notes a tendency amongst churches to use current practice as a starting point for examining mission, and suggests that this may be more fruitful than a normative approach.

### ***3.6.2 Mission***

Minkoff and Powell (2006) suggest that nonprofit survival needs may mean that strategies tend to shape the mission. They also examine the particular role of mission in nonprofits, and stress its importance both as a charter and as a constraint. They usefully compare a mission (based on a perception of what is a public or social good) with a mandate (imposed by external demands, for example from funding bodies). Jeavons (1994) emphasizes that the concept of “calling” in a Christian organization means that any change in mission has important moral and spiritual implications.

Gowans summarized the Salvation Army’s mission as to save souls, grow saints, and serve suffering humanity. These three elements appear to be widely quoted within the Territory, were subsequently adopted as part of its formal mission statement, and are used in this research as a template for assessing results (the decision to do so was taken before their formal adoption by the Territory). They are specific, as well as “simple and clear” (requirements stressed in a church context (p.100) by Warren (1995)). Only with difficulties, however, do they also meet one of Warren’s additional requirements, that of measurability, though Warren’s final section, on Measuring Success, whilst specific is nevertheless itself unquantified. This reflects a key difficulty in that many of the goals for a Christian church are incapable of direct measurement.

The Territory's mission statement is:

“Called to be disciples of Jesus Christ, The Salvation Army United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland exists to save souls, grow saints, and serve suffering humanity.”

This statement was in effect stress-tested before its adoption, through informal use in the Territory. The current research suggests that it has a strong currency – possibly higher than would be found for the mission statements of most organizations – and that it provides an effective and memorable framework for testing activities and plans. It fits well with the specification of Hamermesh (1996) (p.90-91): “. . . the final element to inspiring concretely is the mission of the company. It is here that the mission gets right down to ground level, because it tells everyone in a tangible way what they are trying to achieve.”

### **3.6.3 Vision**

The importance of vision is frequently suggested in the literature, although Hamermesh (1996) states that in his experience perhaps one company in four actually obtains benefit from its adopted and communicated vision. Brierley (2008), in a work aimed at church leaders, stresses vision as being a function of leadership, and writes that it is (p.125) “best, although not inevitable” to establish a vision before thinking strategically. In a Salvation Army context, Gluyas & Foster (2010) stress the importance of the vision being known and taught, including repeated emphasis.

The Territory's vision statement is:

“As disciples of Jesus Christ, we will be a Spirit-filled, radical growing movement with a burning desire to lead people into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, actively serve the community, and fight for social justice.”

### **3.6.4 Values**

Values are also widely seen as critical to a successful modern organization, although Hamermesh (1996) (p.84), offers an important proviso: “Values inform those principles and beliefs that are intended to guide behavior of all members of the organization. To inspire in a concrete way, however, the values have to be rooted in the reality of how the business and its leaders actually behave.”

Grant (2010) examines the societal pressure for organizations to be values driven, but stresses the challenges in doing so, particularly in the light of societal change. Similarly, Prahalad and Doz (2003) suggest a trend towards reliance on basic premisses, on values and on behaviours, from formal structure and processes, whilst recognizing the importance of achieving harmony between all these categories.

An article on the Territory’s recent Administrative Review (described in subsection 3.6.5 below) in *Salvationist* of 8 August 2009 included (p.13) a Statement of Core Values. After a short introduction these are listed as:

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Boldness
- Passion
- Respect
- Compassion.
- 

### **3.6.5 Strategy**

Strategy for nonprofit organizations enjoys a considerable literature. Predominantly, however, this relates to specific types of organization or environment, or to functional strategies. But some literature is more generally relevant. For example, Nutt and Backoff (1995) consider strategy for public and third sector organizations with

particular reference to their environment, and Weerawardena, McDonald and Mort (2010) examine the sustainability of nonprofit organizations, including strategic issues.

One relatively recent attempt to provide strategic focus in the Territory was the formation of a Vision Action Group, also known as the 20/20 Action Group, with the intention of looking 20 years ahead. The objectives in its interim report included numerical membership increases, evangelical training, and local social services support (Brook (1998)). It is interesting to note Brook's comment on the interim position (p.172):

“What seems to be lacking is any clear notion about how these objectives are to be achieved, though no doubt the Action Group will have given that matter serious thought too.”

In 2002 and 2003 a Strategic Framework document (The Salvation Army, 2002) was widely issued at all levels within the Territory, in its full form and in a separate summary document. The full document was itself brief (25 pages), but included

- an analysis of the Territory's present condition
- a review of the Salvation Army's beliefs and values
- a summary of the context within which strategies should be developed
- comments on key resources
- recommended processes to develop strategies
- opportunities to be addressed
- variables to be used to measure the suitability of strategies.

The document thus contained the elements of a strategic planning framework, albeit at a high level, and was accompanied by a strategic planning process, for local strategy setting within a Territory-wide strategic framework. It was apparently not formally withdrawn but atrophied subsequently, although this does not mean that no local strategies existed, or were being implemented.

In March 2007 the Territorial Commander indicated the appointment of a senior officer as Secretary for Administrative Review. A series of articles in *Salvationist* reported on the background and then on progress. On 8 December 2007 the Secretary explained that the review was intended to “identify ways in which we can be more effective in mission terms”, and would involve “learning lessons from the past, giving clarity to our strategic mission objectives for the future and seeking ownership at every level for any change that may be appropriate for today.” (p.6). The article announced (p.7) the outcome of work on mission and vision statements, and the Territorial Commander’s approval of them. It also mentioned work in progress on a statement of core values and “strategic mission objectives”, and indicated that a forthcoming consultation programme would include administrative structures, procedures and processes. The current researcher liaised with the Secretary for Administrative Review to ensure that the research was capable of complementarity; this was confirmed.

In a further article (8 August 2009), the purpose of the Review was summarized as:

- “Are we doing the best we can in the delivery of effective mission?
  - “How can we better allocate and structure the resources God has blessed us with to enhance our mission and bring benefit to corps and social centres?”
- (p.12)

The same article summarized some of the other deliverables, and stated that the final report had been completed and accepted by the senior leadership as a working document, with consultation, consideration, decisions and implementation to follow.

Additionally, the social work of the Territory prompted published studies over recent years, either commissioned as independent reports from The Henley Centre (1999, 2001, 2004) or by its own researchers (Bonner & Luscombe (2008)). These reports are significant not only as informational and opinion-influencing publications, but because some small evidence from the current research suggests that the most recent – Bonner & Luscombe – may be regarded by some as the strategy delineating document in respect of the field it covers.

### ***3.6.6 Strategic mission priority***

The Territorial Commander in *Salvationist* (10 January 2009) articulated a “strategic mission priority” for the Territory, described as “prioritise making disciples – growing saints”. This priority resonates with the view of Hirsch (2006), who sets out six essential elements of “missional DNA” (p.24-25), including disciple making.

### ***3.6.7 Other goals***

Whilst mission is a directing force for an organization, an organization will have other factors that in practice have a significant influence; for example, Jordan (2005) and Harris (1998) both note the potential for conflict between the personal values of individuals and the formal or outward-facing activities.

## **3.7 Alignment of local goals with central mission**

Berry and Bunning (2006) explain the concept of “strategic alignment”, and describe it as a major task for strategic leaders. However, academic research on aligning nonprofit local outcomes with a central mission appears limited.

Penn (1993) researched national/local relationships in voluntary organisations, focusing on one particular charity and on part of a charitable umbrella body, using a primarily longitudinal approach with little applicability to the current study.

Oster (1996) discusses relationships between national nonprofits and local affiliates, showing that affiliates may be organized either as branch offices or as franchises. Grossman and Rangan (2001) examined five case studies to identify tensions within multisite nonprofits, to understand behaviours and to suggest actions to optimise performance. For this they identified a set of “management levers”. Barman and

Chaves (2001) researched a restructuring then in progress at the United Church of Christ, a church with 6,000 congregations, totalling 1.4 million members. They suggest that Grossman and Rangan's analysis should be supplemented by two additional factors – the impact of the structure on the careers of local staff and executives, and the possibility that any central resource crisis might result in greater central empathy to local units to protect their affiliation.

Another suggestion from Barman and Chaves's research is the possibility of "intransitivity of connectedness", by which the authors mean that a fact that the regional level of an organization is well-connected to both the national level and the local level does not necessarily mean that the latter two levels are well-connected to each other. The authors admit that the strength of these relationships was (p.350) "not systematically assessed", but the current research shows some possibility of intransitivity of connectedness, whilst not being able to test it.

### **3.8 Setting goals and measurement**

Hudson (2009) also recognizes this issue, suggesting the need to manage four different types of performance – strategic, operational, individual, and in outcome terms – and emphasizing (p.194) the importance of "outcomes for service users".

Nonprofits face particularly difficult challenges in setting goals and deciding what should be measured. Kaplan (2001), having noted the difficulties that some nonprofits find in setting strategies, comments (p.358):

"Strategy and performance measurement should focus on what output and outcomes the organization intends to achieve, not what programs and initiatives are being implemented."

Kaplan's point is reinforced by Meekings, Briault and Neely (2010), who offer possible solutions to the challenge of reconciling the established benefits of (p.46) "goal-directed behaviour" with the equally established disadvantages of using targets.

Such calls for performance metrics are valid, but some nonprofits – not least churches – face particular difficulties in measuring outputs and especially outcomes. For example, measuring outcomes for the Territory’s objective of “saving souls” involves subjective assessment of an extraordinarily tenuous kind. Kaplan and Grossman (2010) give examples of performance metrics, using balanced scorecard tools and a strategy map.

Similarly, Drucker (1993c) recognizes (p.140) the need for surrogate measures by nonprofits:

“ “Saving souls” as the definition of the objectives of a church is intangible. At least the bookkeeping is not of this world. But church attendance is measurable. And so is “getting the young people back into the church.” ”

A reservation is exemplified in Gluyas & Foster (2010), who caution (p.99) that “ . . . it is good to remember that an increase in numbers is not necessarily healthy growth.” Unhealthy growth is seen in this context as reflecting an inward and conservative focus.

On the other hand, Jackson (2002) – in a chapter entitled “Bums on seats – why they matter” – challenges an undue rejection of quantity in the church, and points out the irony of the effort that has to be put in to addressing the practical consequences of numerical decline and which might often be better spent in efforts at reversing it. He argues that improving quality is the right strategy for addressing quantity too.

Drucker (1992) – in a comment which resonates with some made during interviews in the current research – highlights from personal experience the possibility that a lack of growth (and thus quantity) in a church may be attributable not to a conflict with quality, but simply to preferences against growth, with a concomitant ultimate risk of decline.

The literature includes some guidance on measurement for churches. Brierley (2005) provides an introduction to the use of statistics in a church context. More specifically, Malphurs (1999) – simultaneously an academic, a consultant, and a pastor – includes a



chapter on “Evaluating the Ministry”, and provides sample evaluation forms, using simple numeric ratings and qualitative comments on visitor experience and on the perception of worship services.

Warren (1995) describes one required attribute of a purpose statement as its being measurable. Yet when ending the book with a section entitled “Measuring success”, he includes a single proposed attribute “. . . building the Church on the purposes of God in the power of the Holy Spirit and expecting the results from God.” Arguably this is a mission or an objective, rather than a “measurement” – one could offer surrogate measures for success in “building”, but it is difficult to assess “expecting”. What appears from this definition to be a lack of emphasis on numbers may be consistent, however, with Warren’s wider philosophy – despite having built up a remarkably large congregation, and defending volume in this context, he also argues strongly that quality is also important, and not inconsistent with quantity.

Engel & Norton (1975) suggest a scale against which even spirituality may be measured, and Telfer (2008) explains, using Salvation Army experience, how this may be used as part of a strategic planning process.

Arguably, however, measurement may itself be an unduly restrictive concept, particularly for the mission results of a church. Pattison & Woodward (2000) examine evaluation in a church context, stressing (p.309) that the key “is to ensure that it is appropriate to its function and purpose.” However, they also suggest that evaluating the outcome of an activity is not in itself sufficient - evaluating the process of that activity is also important, and may lead to a different overall evaluation.

In principle, the Salvation Army believes in measurement as a key part of its management approach. Clifton is specific (2010, Vol. 2 p.54): “I love to see the Army growing numerically . . . I believe the Salvation Army should be growing numerically everywhere. There are special factors that we have to face in some places, especially in

western and post-modern cultures, but the bottom line is that healthy churches grow, and they grow numerically.”

Measurable results was one of five attributes cited by Drucker as a basis for his description of the Salvation Army as being “by far the most effective organization in the U.S.” (quoted in Watson & Brown (2001, p.15)). The Territory is thought to espouse the same doctrine. Larsson (1988) – who subsequently served both as Territorial Commander for the Territory, and later as General – stressed the organization’s analytical emphasis. In practice, there may be a greater emphasis on measuring inputs, processes and outputs rather than outcomes.

Salvation Army literature has limited direct material on how statistics can be meaningfully translated into measurement and then related to goals. Escott (1996) used a growth index of soldiership numbers over a 10-year period in his study of the application of church growth principles to the Salvation Army. The formula reported by Larsson (1988) as then being used by the Salvation Army in Australia was more complex and more inclusive, mixing weighted membership numbers and attendances. Larsson justifies an additional weighting given to soldiers in the formula; and the current researcher (before encountering this literature reference) similarly decided to weight soldiers doubly in relation to adherents and junior soldiers. Use of an index and the weighting of soldiers’ numbers are both arguably desirable, as is such an attempt at greater inclusivity.

An interesting – albeit dated – study is that of Smith, Carson and Alexander (1984), who in a 20-year longitudinal study of 50 United Methodist ministers in Ohio found that effective leadership correlated with improved performance of their churches. Performance was measured by attendances, membership, property value and giving, and took account of leadership moves between churches. But effective leadership was evaluated not by performance (which would presumably have involved circular reasoning), but by their salary, which was seen (partly because of its determination by the congregation) as (p.769) “an objective performance appraisal measure”. This is

arguable; one might alternatively reason that, in effect, the study confirms instead the validity of the congregations' judgment of reward for leadership. The effective ministers' consistency of performance in different appointments was also confirmed by the research.

Green and others (2001) assessed the relationships and tensions between the board members and local chief professional officers of a national charity, suggesting a need for further research into measuring effectiveness in nonprofits. Interestingly, Green and others commented that self-reporting of organizational effectiveness appeared from their own research to be reliable. One element of the current research has been an attempt to check the validity of this experience in the context of the Territory.

Some outputs of corps activities are measured – for example meetings of parent-toddler groups or of the elderly. However, much of the social impact in corps is unmeasured – for example, soldiers inviting vulnerable individuals to meals in their own homes, or one-to-one ad hoc counselling. Thus reliance on statistics could unbalance the view taken, and a wider judgmental approach is required.

Social services delivered through dedicated centres have more reliable statistics for outcomes, partly because of their specialised staff, but also because of the need for accountability, given external funding and service contracts. Statistics vary with the purpose of each establishment, but include such considerations as hostel bed usage rates, or numbers successfully completing rehabilitation programmes.

### **3.9 Individual influential levers**

#### ***3.9.1 Strategic planning***

For the proposed research the term “strategic planning” is interpreted to mean the establishment, implementation and review of strategy through a formal process, whether organization-wide or specific to a particular unit.

Strategic planning is one component of strategic management. Strategy and strategic planning are widely covered in the literature, including an extensive literature on strategic planning for nonprofits. Oster (1995), in a work devoted to strategic management for nonprofits, covers strategic planning only briefly, though very supportively; but much of the overall text covers areas relevant to strategic planning, such as mission, cooperation, competition, structural analysis and change. Many authors are more specific. Lawrie (1994) gives three entry points where nonprofits should engage in planning – responding to environmental change, responding to decision points for the future, and (probably decisive for many nonprofits) satisfying the requirements of funding organizations.

As commented upon in subsection 3.6.5, a considerable literature exists on strategy for third sector and nonprofit organizations, though much of this is contextual. Specific literature also exists on strategy for churches, such as Allison & Kaye (1997), Malphurs (1999) and Marshall (2003), who apply broadly conventional strategic planning processes into this specific context.

Strategy itself is so widely and variously defined that Ghemawat and others (1998) declined to add their own definition at the outset of their study. Many definitions mirror in essence the historic definition of Chandler (1962), who saw strategy as deciding key long-term goals and objectives for an organization; and adopting actions and allocating resources to carry them out. A more up-to-date, as well as succinct and useful, summary of the purpose of strategy is provided by Drucker (2001) in one of his last books. After explaining the concept of a theory of the business, possessed by every organization, he goes on to say (p.43):

“Strategy converts this Theory of the Business into performance. Its purpose is to enable an organization to achieve its desired results in an unpredictable environment. For strategy allows an organization to be *purposefully opportunistic*. [Author’s italics]”

Kay (2006) writes (p.27):

“So what is needed in defining a firm’s strategy is to identify the markets and activities in which the firm’s distinctive capability is relevant, and then put together the skills needed to capture these markets and perform these activities.”

Whilst these comments appear in a business context, if interpreted in a church environment Drucker’s in particular could fairly be described as summarizing the Salvation Army’s strategy in the growth period which was its first half-century. The period of subsequent decline in the Territory may be argued as having been predominantly reactive, dominated by the tactics as well as the strategy of earlier years.

A strong point is also made in the Introduction to Guest, Tusting & Woodhead (2004), where (based on Richter (2004) in the same volume), they suggest that local churches in the United Kingdom may suffer from a lack of freedom and flexibility compared with those in the United States, as a result of their typically being part of a more cohesive larger entity. Interestingly, the current research suggests that within the Territory individual congregations and their leaders are increasingly creating bottom-up diversity in strategies, despite the retention of restrictive organizational policies in some other respects.

Yet even such restrictions are under pressure; Clifton (1999) describes how the international Salvation Army struggled iteratively with updating its policy on divorce and remarriage, given varying international cultures, and suggests that such issues will never be subject to a perfect solution. Larsson (1988) distinguishes (p.12) between institutional factors such as territorial and divisional policies (responding to Clifton’s comments, one might add international organizational policies) and those factors that are contextual for the local corps. Of the former, he adds (p12): “For some these factors may not be as encouraging as they would wish. But it is one of the Army’s great assets that the smallest unit has the strength and reputation and solidity of the Army as a whole behind it, whilst still having the glorious freedom to initiate, adapt and experiment.”

Brews and Purohit (2007), in a multinational survey of 886 firms, found an association between performance and higher planning levels, but found that types of planning might vary with its purpose.

Zook and Allen (2007) suggest that a business may need to redefine its core to ensure survival, often reflecting a cycle of Focus – Expand – Redefine over time. This could be relevant, by analogy, to the present research. Even if it were argued that the general practice of the Territory is to encourage local operational diversity to meet local demographic and environmental diversity, and to recognize local resource implications, it could still be argued that it is unclear whether this represents a strategy to create diversity (thus redefining or abandoning the traditional core) or a practice of diversity as a concession to local reality without changing the traditional core. Either interpretation, could have implications for the consistency of the well-established Salvation Army brand.

Although the concept of strategy is widely used, Collis and Rukstad (2008) suggest that few executives could summarize their company's strategy within 35 words, but suggest (p.82) that "the companies that those executives work for are often the most successful in their industry."

Much of the literature focuses on competitive strategy, whose effectiveness is measured at least partially against other organizations. Markides (2006) for example states (p.97) "If strategy is necessary, the next question is how to come up with a *differentiated* strategy [Author's italics]". Particularly notably, competition is also a key feature of Porter's work (Porter (1998a), Porter (1998b), Porter (1998c)). A competitive focus remains relevant for many nonprofits (especially in funding, but also in attracting clients), but is less relevant to religious organizations. Nevertheless it may still exist (the Territory bids, for example, against other organizations to supply social services), and some of the tools of competitive strategy (for example, positioning and capabilities) may also be important.

Miller (2002) applies strategic management and, in particular, competitive strategy even more widely to churches, admitting that some concepts such as value chains may be less relevant, but stressing their dependence on resources from their environment, not only in terms of physical assets, but also membership and commitment. Miller (p.439) quotes Berger as stating: “ . . . the religious tradition, which previously could be authoritatively imposed, now has to be *marketed*. It must be ‘sold’ to a clientele that is no longer constrained to ‘buy’. Interestingly, Miller also comments (p.439): “This portrayal of the competitive forces within religion suggests the industry is not particularly attractive.”

Porter (1998a) suggests that the current emphasis on strategic planning demonstrates the value of an explicit process for creating strategy, though he claims that the result is more oriented to asking questions than to answering them.

Strategic planning for nonprofits is also widely discussed. For example, Oster (1995) stresses its value in building a common vision for the boards and staff of nonprofits, and eliminating conflict.

Strategic planning must be distinguished from strategic management, of which it is a component. Oster summarises strategic management in a schematic that essentially identifies goals in the light of mission and the environment, identifies any gap in the resources needed to achieve those goals, creates a strategy to close the gap, and employs a feedback loop to re-assess the goals. Hudson (2009) uses his emphasis on strategy to lead into the concept of strategic management, which he sees as incorporating vision, mission, strategic objectives, performance measures, strategies and annual objectives, all set in the contexts of values and of the external environment. He sees strategic planning as a tool for building (p.159) “a widely shared conception of the future of the organisation and its managerial priorities”. On this basis, strategic planning is best seen as a process capable of contributing to strategic management.

Steiner (1979), writing at a time which might be called the Golden Age of formal strategic planning, sets out bipolar extremes, stating (p.8-9):

“There are two fundamentally different ways for a manager to formulate strategic plans for the future. The first is to meet each day as it arrives and make strategic decisions only on that basis . . . In contrast, the formal planning system is organized and developed on the basis of a set of procedures.”

Steiner recognizes, however, that although the approaches may clash they are complementary. Johnson and Scholes (2008), in the context of a broader and more contemporary review of strategy, discuss strategic planning amongst various approaches to strategy development, and emphasize the greater insights obtainable by looking at the topic through different “lenses”:

- strategy as design
- strategy as experience
- strategy as ideas
- strategy as discourse.

One benefit of strategic planning may arise if it is able to reduce the danger – suggested by Moldoveanu (2009) – that managers tend to focus on “easy” decisions (measured by their complexity), rather than on “hard” ones.

A frequent comment in the literature on strategic planning is the danger of descent into excessive detail. Sloan (2006) emphasizes this, but as well as recognizing the need for flexibility and intuition – resonating, though the works are not cited, with Duggan (2002), Duggan (2003) and Duggan (2007), as discussed below – she stresses the need for detailed plans for particular contingencies. She also reports the danger of abandoning strategic thinking in favour of “operational triage” in a challenging economic environment, and a tendency to shorten the strategic horizon to a period where it is no longer strategic. She makes the important point (p.23) that:



“If the past is considered to be a less reliable predictor of the future than previously believed, then chance or chaos becomes an appealing and relevant alternative explanation to strategic planning – but not to strategic thinking.”

This is reinforced by her view of strategic thinking as a concept that can, via a strategic learning process, allow adaptation and influence rather than submission.

Mintzberg (1994), outlines ten different schools of strategy formation, based on earlier work; the same taxonomy is used in Mintzberg et al (2009). Both works include an important concept, addressing the difference between theory and practice in strategic planning by creating a simple model, with Intended Strategy bifurcating into Unrealized Strategy and Deliberate Strategy, and the latter then combining with Emergent Strategy to form Realized Strategy. This is a helpful approach to understanding reality. However, whilst not intrinsically an oxymoron, the term Emergent Strategy has elements of it – it is hard to see how what emerges unplanned can be classified as “strategy” in any accepted sense of the term. The model could be amended by renaming Emergent Strategy as Unplanned Influences (which might go beyond strategic drift), with the term Emergent Strategy then becoming the implicitly adopted path from combining Deliberate Strategy with Unplanned Influences, which path might or might not be transformed into Realized Strategy.

Mintzberg (1994) brings a contingency basis to the topic, by applying to strategic planning the five forms of organization used by him in earlier work. Of the five forms – machine, entrepreneurial, professional, adhocracy and diversified – the Territory could currently best be described as a machine organization, with a limited degree of professional, and possibly a developing local adhocracy. Interestingly, in its earlier days it might better have been described as combining entrepreneurial and adhocracy organizations. However, Mintzberg’s analysis of a typical planning approach in a machine organization raises interesting issues, since the planning approach of the Territory appears from the research to be more informal and tentative than application of Mintzberg’s description would suggest, thus challenging the degree of strategic fit.

Mintzberg (1994) also argues the need for synthesis as well as analysis in strategic planning, and (taking support from Herbert Simon) stresses the need for analysis to be coupled with intuition. He uses the term “soft analysis” to describe a situation where “a predisposition to analysis [is tempered by] an appreciation for intuition, and even a certain use of it . . . ” (p.332).

This concept of intuition is central to a distinctive view of strategy, which throws particular insights on the Salvation Army’s strategic approaches, exemplified by Duggan (2002), who outlines the concept of *coop d’oeil* (glance), understood as a sudden insight into the appropriate course to adopt to attain strategic ends. From that work he applies the theory more particularly to business strategy in Duggan (2003) and Duggan (2007). In recognizing the validity of various views of strategy, he focuses particularly on three schools (strategic planning, the learning organization, and competitive strategy). He sees such varied strategic approaches as complemented by strategic intuition because the latter provides an approach to the actual formulation of strategic options, which otherwise tends to be a “black box”, not addressed in detail in most analyses of strategic processes. Strategic intuition is understood as consisting of four elements – the *coup d’oeil* itself, presence of mind (meaning a constant readiness for the unexpected), resolution (a determination to proceed with a strategy once it is identified as correct), and an augmentation of personal experience by a wide study of historical analogies and examples – in effect a database of components for strategic options.

Rumelt (2011) offers an approach to strategy that, whilst Duggan is not cited, has much in common with the latter’s concept, suggesting insight as the heart of effective strategy. He warns, however, of the danger of (p.266) “overly quick closure” on a judgment, to the exclusion of alternative views; and he emphasizes (p.267) that for the specific knowledge required to generate strategy “There is no substitute for on-the-ground experience.”

Roberto (2009) has taught and researched primarily on decision making, particularly in a strategic context. His analysis of the importance of intuition (pp.14-15, 75-77) builds on research by psychologist Gary Klein which based intuition on a search for patterns; and suggests that intuition depends on the ability to use relevant analogies, though Roberto goes on to stress the commensurate danger of faulty analogies. Klein's approach had previously been discussed in Roberto (2005), where the concept was expressed as people's simulating future scenarios. Roberto's analysis of intuition links well with Duggan's and with Rumelt's, in that it directly reflects *coup d'oeil* and the database of experience.

Duggan's approach is interesting in the Salvation Army context, because William Booth's theories and practices have had a powerful and pervasive impact on Salvation Army culture and decision models, and an approach commensurate with Duggan's theories can be identified at key points of Booth's life. In terms of Duggan's model, an argument could be made that Salvation Army strategic thinking has subsequently, and perhaps consequently, suffered from an excess of resolution in adherence to the original insights, from tactical rather than strategic presence of mind, and possibly a tendency to focus on internal rather than wider analogies.

Scott (1998) identifies several benefits to a company from strategic planning, including the collateral benefits from the planning process itself, the ability of sub-units to better understand and respond to their role, better alignment between sub-unit proposals and higher level objectives, and better alignment with dynamic and emerging company strategy.

Bowman (1998) questions why senior executives often pursue strategic planning in "a rather sterile ritual" (p.8). He suggests that this may be because they feel they lack an ability to control business units; but warns of a potential danger – if the process itself is ineffective, then any belief that it contributes to control may be illusory.

The importance of implementation of strategy is frequently emphasized in the literature. Birnik and Moat (2008) suggest that the number of good strategies not developing into productive action is high, and suggest a possible approach for an action-based (p.29) “strategy grid” summary.

Neilson, Martin and Powers (2008) refer separately to strategy and execution, but again stressing companies’ typically poor performance at execution. Their analysis suggests that information and decision rights are each roughly twice as important as motivators or structure in securing successful strategy execution; furthermore, they suggest that addressing the first two correctly often helps find the path to the lesser two elements.

Martin (2010) – a different Martin from the previous reference – challenges the separation of execution from strategy, and doubts that it is even possible (for example) for strategy to be excellent and execution weak. Rumelt (2011) emphasizes effective action plans as a key component of strategy.

An important concept in the execution of strategy is the effectiveness of the organization’s human resources management. Ulrich (1998) outlines that author’s seminal views on the strategic use of human resources. He offers (pp.124-125) four ways in which “HR [human resources] can help deliver organizational excellence”. The first of these is to be a partner with senior management and line management in executing strategy; but the other three ways also have potentially significant impact on how effectively strategy is translated into results, and how well organizational transformation is attained. Ulrich stresses that re-orienting human resources in this way is a task not only for that specific function, but also for senior line managers.

Ulrich’s concept has many implications. For example, a pre-requisite for successful execution is the need for people throughout an organization to have a meaningful understanding not only of the strategy, but of their own specific part in its attainment. To this end Bungay (2011) offers a five-step process for a cascade of briefings, covering intent, context, measurement, tasks and boundaries.

Several sources analyse the history of strategy formation into either chronological phases or conceptual models, or both. For chronological phases, Koch (2011) identifies seven phases of corporate strategy, culminating in the currently dominant one, which he sees as characterized by varied new thinking, widespread front-line interest, and lessons from other disciplines. Kiechel (2010) describes a 1978 McKinsey study, specifying (p.107) successive phases in “strategic decision making”. For conceptual models, Mintzberg’s ten schools of strategy formation form one example, as do his five P’s of defining strategy – plan, pattern, position, perspective or ploy. Similarly, Johnson and others (2008) use four lenses of strategy – as design, as experience, as ideas and as discourse.

There is a general assumption in strategy texts that a strategic solution is ultimately available for every problem, but in a challenging article Camillus (2008) raises the possibility of “wicked” problems, which appear to defy any solution. Such problems have many causes and no solution – they can be tamed, rather than solved, and Camillus suggests possible approaches to addressing such problems. It might be excessive to argue that the Territory faces such a situation, but the steady numerical decline over decades, with its concurrent practical disadvantages, is a challenge to which successive leaderships have failed to find an effective solution.

As explained earlier in this subsection, within the concepts of strategy and strategic management, strategic planning is recognized as an important component. Although academic commentators recognize that neither analytical categories nor actual practices are discrete, there seems to be a tendency sometimes to analyze strategic planning and its practice in such absolute terms that almost automatically discredit it in current conditions – though earlier writers such as Steiner (1979) and Ansoff (1986) provide potential evidence for this. There is sometimes inadequate analysis of how the benefits of strategic planning could be (and whether in practice they sometimes are) obtained by its pragmatic combination with responsive management – the active use of a well-conceived outline plan to guide pragmatic adjustments and periodic reconsideration as

events unfold. Another relative flaw in the literature seems to be insufficient attention to the contingency factors in deciding the appropriateness of strategic planning – for example, whether a belief that strategy may be developed empirically from the ground up could necessarily be applied to a large compliance-regulated financial services sales company to the same degree that it might in a small innovative research-based organization.

The role of planning in the Christian church is not free from debate, but a variety of authors such as Callahan (1983) – with his subtitle, *Strategic Planning for Mission* – emphasize its importance. Telfer (2008) suggests an approach to strategic planning for churches, and Yuill (2003) – like Telfer, basing his views on Salvation Army experience – challenges (p.83-4) possible objections to strategic planning in the Christian church, arguing that the Acts of the Apostles makes clear the attention of the early church to planning and organizing. He offers a simple strategic planning model, presented in a church-centric context, but including the basic concepts of internal and external analysis, “strategic thrusts” (p.80-81), action planning, communication, and evaluation.

An important issue within strategic planning is the need to review and if necessary to change strategy. Patler (2006) suggests seven tests for a strategy, and the need for constant scrutiny – though he also suggests that strategy is often changed precipitously.

An inherent factor within strategy is the necessity for choices. Porter (1998a), for example, offers three generic strategies of overall cost leadership, differentiation and focus, and stresses the dangers of attempting to straddle them. Similarly, Ebben & Johnson (2005), researching 344 small firms, found that those focusing on either flexibility or efficiency performed better than those whose strategies attempted both. These lessons may also be relevant to churches and other nonprofits.

An important opportunity is shown by Collier, Fishwick and Floyd (2004), who demonstrated from a survey with 6,400 responding managers that involving managers

in strategy improved their perception of the process, and that top-down process and political or adverse cultural perceptions were negatively associated with involvement.

### ***3.9.2 Leadership and management***

Although widely recognized as separate topics (and treated as discrete levers in the current research) leadership and management are both examined in this subsection, reflecting their strong interrelationships in the literature as well as in practice.

Mintzberg (1998) illustrates this interrelationship by stressing the presence of both aspects in the work of a particular orchestral artistic director and conductor (who by coincidence is personally known to the current researcher).

The importance of leadership is widely accepted. Colville and Murphy (2006), for example, suggest it as the key feature linking dynamic aspects of strategy and organization. Montgomery (2008) stresses the need for leadership to supplement analysis to ensure responsive strategy. The point is also emphasized by Rumelt (2011), who links the design of good strategy to a leader's ability to identify critical issues, and focus on them.

Unsurprisingly, an extensive literature exists on leadership in organisations; arguably this must be one of the most actively discussed areas of current organisational debate, discussion and exhortation. Brinckerhoff (1999) reports (p.136) that: "There are at least 100 good books on leadership available as of this writing", although Kakabadse, Bank & Vinnicombe (2005) suggest that only in recent years have the decades of research begun to be assembled into a coherent picture. Hudson (2003) cites a survey by the Brookings Institute of 250 researchers and management supporters in the United States, indicating leadership as being the single most critical factor for effective organizations, and as virtually the inevitable starting point for improving performance.

Hammermesh (1996) comments (p.119) that: "Leadership isn't that complicated. And you don't have to be born with charisma and brilliance to be an effective leader."

Davis (2006) suggests a relative stagnation in leadership thinking, stressing in particular the importance of effective leaders at every level, but doubting any automatic transfer to a wider audience from the executive levels at which much leadership thinking is currently aimed. Kay (1996) stresses that leadership is not restricted to those in a role of authority – it can equally apply to individuals or groups; and Cameron (2010) recognizes that much leadership responsibility in churches is exercised by individuals who would not identify themselves with such a role. This “every level” theme corresponds with one of the approaches of the current research in looking at leadership.

The emphasis of Boyzatis, McKee and Smith (2006) is, however, that the challenges of leadership are far from stagnant, suggesting a demise in effectiveness of command and control leadership, and the advent of a need for “resonant leadership” (p.279), which is inspiring and capable of building constructive relationships.

Beer (2009), in a quest for high commitment, high performance organizations (HCHP), states categorically (p.151) that “The most important resource in the HCHP journey is the leader.” Grant (2010) draws attention to the changing requirement for leadership – moving away from a decisions-focus to an ability to develop the organization coherently, including (p.473) creating “organizational identity and common purpose”. Child (2003) follows the same argument in stressing the multiple contribution that leadership can make to organizational learning, most importantly by establishing a supportive culture.

Mintzberg stresses the danger of over-focusing on chief executives when considering leadership (Mintzberg (2002) and (2004)), and links this (2002, p.71) to a distinction between “heroic management” (which stresses hierarchy) and “engaging management”, with the implication that the latter approach provides ethical as well as organizational benefits.



Alongside the widely-acknowledged importance of leadership, attention is now being given to the related issue of “followership”, which may be particularly important in nonprofits, with their dependence on volunteers. Kellerman (2007) examines and classifies followers, and suggests that views of leadership need to be broadened to include this concept.

A corresponding point is made by Whittington (1993), suggesting (p.61) that:

“Leadership is about more than just fitting strategy to the market environment; it is about fitting yourself to the social environment.”

Whittington’s and Kellerman’s approaches both have similarities to the distributed leadership concept as explained in Spillane (2006), in Spillane, Halverson & Diamond (2004), in Thorpe, Gold and Lawler (2011), and in Bolden (2012). This concept looks beyond theoretical leadership to its thinking and practice, and sees leadership as a social rather than an individual activity, including the three elements of leaders, followers and the situation. The latter term is broadly interpreted, including (for example) tools and symbols. However, leadership itself is also broadly interpreted, with examples being given of activities which others might interpret as management; and since their work is based on a schools environment, this view of “leadership” might almost be re-titled “head-teachership”. Looked at from their viewpoint, leadership might be considered an organizational construct, rather than as one of a personal skill or responsibility.

Berry and Bunning (2006) outline four approaches to leadership, depending on the leadership group’s degree of orientation to change and its degree of intervention:

- accidental leadership
- preservative leadership
- enabling leadership
- strategic leadership.

A useful and practical analysis of leadership comes from Hamermesh (1996), who suggests (p.123) that its essence is “ . . . three tasks: setting direction, generating trust, and providing winning results.”

Bennis (2006) from his wide expertise on leadership suggests four critical aspects, which he sees as independent of either context or culture: the capacity to adapt, the capacity to obtain alignment towards a common goal, an ability of leaders to continually understand themselves and their effect on others, and a moral compass. Day (2006) believes that corporate role models should be leaders who (p.291) “restore the appeal of corporate life”.

A different, though related, view of leadership comes from Bains (2007) in the concept of “good enough leadership”, reflecting leaders who demonstrate such an attitude through (p.68):

“ . . . their appreciation of the complexity and messiness of human behaviour, in their recognition of the need to tolerate failure and error, and in their acceptance of the peculiar narcissistic burden of leadership – the need to accept others’ often unconscious and primitive desire to be led without being corrupted by those desires. It is revealed, above all, in their recognition that leadership, just like parenting, has a strong teaching component . . . ”

Lamdin and Tilley (2007), with a specific focus on helping those who support newly-ordained ministers, use the word “supervision” to cover both management and mentoring. In terms of the influential levers of the current research, mentoring partially links leadership and management, and also relates strongly to learning support and performance management.

Leadership is widely recognized as a key factor in Christian churches – justifying a considerable literature, whether entire works such as the 35 chapters of contributors’ views on a range of topics in Nelson (2008) or through an individual chapter, for

example, in Callahan (1983). Cameron (2010) stresses that diminishing respect for authority means that the credibility of the leader is critical.

The Salvation Army has been a source of specific leadership literature. Hill (2006) examined the subject historically. Other sources relevant to contemporary leadership in the organization include Yuill (2003), The Salvation Army (2008), and Street (2003). The latter focuses on the concept of servant leadership, highlighted by two key Salvation Army reports, which together saw it as a model for the organization, worldwide and at all levels. From a wider viewpoint than the Salvation Army, servant leadership is the subject of Greenleaf (1998). Peacock (2005) examined Salvation Army leadership and suggested elements for a more suitable model for future needs.

Historically, the Salvation Army has had an authoritarian and hierarchical culture. The family of William Booth, its founder, were prominent and highly successful in leadership, but the rigid loyalty demanded from them led to some of his children leaving the organization. Most significantly, a crisis developed in 1928–9, when Booth's highly talented son Bramwell (his successor as General) suffered from a protracted illness. After a long, divisive and bitterly-fought constitutional battle, Bramwell Booth was deposed in 1929 on the grounds of ill health, and a successor appointed. (Larsson (2009)).

The 1929 crisis has always been sensitive within the Salvation Army, and Larsson (himself a former General) describes his book as the first comprehensive account written by a Salvationist. The present research suggests that much has changed since 1929, but that some perceptions of hierarchy still exist. This is confirmed by Pallant (2007), whose study also reveals perceptions of inconsistency, with one Divisional Commander in the Territory suggesting that the way that he and his peers were themselves treated was very different (impliedly more rigidly) than how they were expected to treat their own teams.

However, Pallant's examination of hierarchy in the Territory goes further, suggesting not just that the Salvation Army's governance model, regulations and cultures may be out of tune with the cultures of many voluntary associations in the Western world, including some churches, but that they also may fail to reflect a doctrinal shift in the Salvation Army away from hierarchy over the most recent half of its history.

Despite their overlaps, the distinction between leadership and management is important, to avoid a danger of leadership simply being regarded as a superior form of management.

Hudson (2009) makes the important – though almost superfluous – point (p.332) that “The concepts of management and leadership are closely related and they overlap.”

That said, he makes the distinction well (p.332):

“Management is concerned with the efficient administration of the organisation . . . “Effective chief executives have to rise beyond management and provide leadership. Leadership is what clarifies the mission, motivates people, seeks new opportunities, gives organisations a sense of purpose and focuses people on the task.”

Handy (1990), with a sweeping but useful generalisation distinguishes between mutual support organisations (desiring only servicing and support), service-delivery organizations (that must be managed), and campaigning organizations (that must be led). This is relevant to the Territory, which in many ways combines the last two types, but with complexities that suggest the dangers of over-simplicity.

Birkinshaw and Goddard (2009) argue that for 30 years leadership has received more attention than management, and that the balance between them needs to be redressed. The same point is made by Saunders (2011).

Pattison (2000) suggests that leadership tends to be more acceptable in churches as a concept than does management, but rightly expresses uncertainty (p.287) “whether this usage does not create as much confusion as it solves, since leadership both inside and outside the church is an ambivalent concept capable of many interpretations and (mis-)understandings.” The cogency of this point is not restricted to churches.

The research assumes that both management and leadership may be used as levers, and that despite the blurring between them they justify being examined separately. Either or both may be strong or weak, and Handy’s analysis suggests that the relevance of the combination deployed may have an impact on success or failure in meeting organizational objectives.

Tulgan (2007), based on his interaction with thousands of managers, is emphatic not only about the need for management but on the extent of its neglect, leading to undermanagement, the reverse of micromanagement.

Gwyther (2006) gives evidence of an adverse public view of management in the United Kingdom, and cites reasons, including a generally dismissive attitude to management theory, contrasting perhaps with a growing interest in leadership through television and popular books. He offers guidance, and suggests that prominent new leaders may be succeeding through a Sun Tzu based approach of leading people by walking behind them. Crainer (2010) agrees with the suggestion that management is not well regarded – “Management has had a bad press.” (p.15) – and comments tellingly that (p.14): “Management is something people fall into.”

Research by Ghoshal and Bruch (2004) suggested that only 10% of managers took purposeful action, with 30% procrastinating, 20% detached and 40% distracted in busyness; the authors see willpower rather than motivation as the key to purposeful action, with motivationally-focused leadership seen as of limited value and potentially counter-productive.

Birkinshaw (2010) suggests two possible approaches to management – an organization can decide specifically on a management model, or can employ high-quality managers who will perform the task well; the best companies do both. Like other academic writers he stresses the contingency nature of management, but also emphasizes the need for a willingness to experiment.

The importance of management is succinctly expressed by Maister (2006) (p.149):

“A person doesn’t build a business. A person builds an organization that builds a business . . . there comes a point where the central question is, ‘Can you manage?’ ”

This fits well with Drucker’s recurrent emphasis on management as being focused on achieving performance or results (Drucker (1993a), Drucker (1993c), Drucker (2001) and specifically for nonprofits in Drucker (1992)).

Mintzberg (2006), with his distinctive approach to management, doubts that new skill sets will be needed, or even that management changes very much; this resonates with Hamermesh (1996), who suggests (p.xi) that “The principles of good management are not complicated, nor do they change over time.” Mintzberg (2006) also argues that managers need to look more deeply at themselves and their organizations, to think more deeply or widely, to consider social responsibility, and to avoid simplistic techniques and “simple-minded strategy” – he uses the term “managing quietly”. Mintzberg (2009) provides a recent seminal work on management overall, from one of its most important and prolific commentators.

Pattison (2000) describes a growing interest from churches in management and leadership, ascribing this to a combination of increased societal interest and the need to make full use of resources in churches at a time when membership is often falling. Yet management as a concept causes discomfort within churches. Pallant (2007) quoting Pattison’s concern that management theories and practices should not be regarded in a church concept as unqualifiedly positive, goes on to comment (p.20): “Management should be regarded as a faith and belief system which can be problematic from a theological perspective”. Whilst recognizing this danger, one may note the recognition

of management situations and solutions even within the Bible – for example, the recognition by both Old Testament Moses and by the New Testament apostles of the need to delegate (The Revised English Bible (1989), respectively Exodus chapter 18 and Acts of the Apostles chapter 6).

Within the Territory the language and practice of management have been widely adopted, though concerns exist to ensure that it should be seen in its place as a tool of the fundamental purpose of the organization, rather than as an end of its own. Thus Pallant noted the degree to which Divisional Commanders used business or quasi-business terms in dialogue during his research, contrasting this with the content of a study of Church of England bishops. He also suspects that management in the Salvation Army may be pragmatically rather than theologically driven, and suggests a need for greater care in the use of managerial language (p.52) “to assess whether it is in line with God’s redemptive purposes.” This concern may touch both strategic and operational issues.

A valid question comes from Hollinghurst (2010), who asks (p.218):

“How can one tell if a church is a cross-cultural expression of faith or the result of consumer culture compromising faith? The problem is that both can look the same at first glance.”

To answer this question he offers the touchstone of the path that led to the particular situation, and whether it truly represented a considered and researched response to the genuine needs of a local culture, or an attempt to market to the desires of a local population. This is, perhaps, a distinction that is easier to define than to recognize in practice, but Hollinghurst would probably have the support of most mission-oriented church members in his statement (p.219) that “In a consumer culture it is impossible to police the marketing of faith, but we can’t assume that what sells must be what’s right.”

An important aspect of management is the concept of accountability. Davis Smith (1996) examines the management of volunteers, and the challenge of balancing the needs of volunteers with an appropriate degree of formal process.

Pallant (2007) in his research on the work of Divisional Commanders was surprised to find that Divisional Commanders in the Territory (p.44) “gave little priority (as opposed to time) to management activities”, with the exception of their own Divisional Headquarters teams. With this exception, such activities were “generally viewed as a ‘necessary evil’ ”. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that as well as identifying the danger that a lack of sufficiently clear accountability for Divisional Commanders might be a missional failing as well as a management risk, he also identified a risk that if the Divisional Commanders were free to develop their own “way of life” (p.58), it was likely that individual corps and centres would do so too, which might adversely impact upon missional success. This is an important point, which the current research reflects; whether by design or more likely (in Mintzberg’s terms (1994)) by emergent strategy, there may be a default strategy in the Territory that its approach is to some degree to allow corps to adopt their own “way of life”, with consequent dangers as well as potential benefits.

Another important management aspect is management style. Beyer and Nutzinger (1993) (cited in Torry (2005), found a contrast between the co-operative style favoured by staff in religious organizations, and their experiences with hierarchical management; and Pallant’s research showed that most Divisional Commanders in his sample found a conflict in their combination of management and pastoral responsibilities.

An important concept linked to both leadership and management, and sometimes seen as increasingly significant in the current environment is that of teamwork. The concept is in danger of being regarded almost as a totem in itself, but Belbin (2006) is careful to point out that the desirability of teamwork is contingent not axiomatic, and that some jobs are better done by individuals.

As explained earlier in this section, despite the overlaps and linkages between leadership and management, they are distinct and are both important. To deliver both within an organization requires either that it includes both leaders and managers, or that



individuals are recruited or developed who are capable of exercising both capacities. However, Zaleznik (1977) draws attention to the different personalities and attitudes of the two types, and suggests that environments which favour one may well have the effect of stifling the other. This may be a serious challenge, which even if it cannot be completely solved may need to be addressed in a variety of ways, including structural (for example with greater use of teams) or developmental (Zaleznik stresses for example the importance of mentoring in developing leaders).

### ***3.9.3 Resource availability***

The resource-based view of a firm is an important contemporary strategic concept, and resources are recognised in the literature as potentially critical to the success of an organization. Acedo, Barroso and Galan (2006) review the literature, examine the assumptions within the resource-based theory, and identify three main views within the theory, based on resources, knowledge and relationships. Crook et al (2008) analyzed 25 studies covering over 29,000 organizations, and found an important statistical relationship between strategic resources and performance. Callahan (1983) shows the importance of resources in the Christian church, with three chapters that include parking, land, space and facilities, and finance.

Dranove and Marciano (2005) usefully distinguish (p.50) between resources (which they categorise as nouns – “things a firm possesses”) and capabilities (verbs – “what the firm does with its resources”). Applying these concepts to influential levers (and using the “first-order” and “second-order” distinction described in Section 3.2), it appears that resources might be regarded as a first-order lever (since management can provide or authorise more or fewer or different resources), whereas capabilities are a consequence of the use of first-order levers, and thus are second-order levers (since they cannot be provided directly by superior management, but can only be built through the use of first-order levers). This research addresses resource availability, but does not directly address capability building.

Finance is an important component of resources. One key aspect of finance for nonprofits is fundraising, in respect of which public confidence has a key impact. A significant danger is the risk of strategic drift as a consequence of external funding, in the case of the Territory this being from governmental bodies in respect of social services activities. Acheson (2010) suggests that supposed bilateral benefits may not always be achieved from an organization's viewpoint. A similar dilemma, exemplified by the response of one particular advice-giving organization, is suggested in Benson (2010).

For all nonprofits, people are a key resource – Oster (1995) stresses not only the high proportion of expenses devoted to paid labour, but also the immense contribution of voluntary labour, augmented by the influence of staff and volunteers as a key stakeholder group. Applying this to churches, Cameron (2010) recognizes time as a critical factor for a local church, and suggests that the limited availability of volunteer resource in a church may lead to the use of a paid coordinator, together with a more structured approach to managing volunteers. This is developed further by Howlett (2010), who suggests reviewing how professionalism in the role can be developed, whilst recognizing the need for a contingent approach.

Premises are also a key resource for churches, primarily for church and associated buildings, but also for charity shops. Cameron (2010) suggests that the true value of church assets (including premises) may be overlooked.

Within the Territory, Pallant (2007) found that management activity of Divisional Commanders tended to focus on allocating and using resources, with their absence of fundraising responsibility being a factor in this.

The relationship between the two influential levers of resource availability and budgetary processes is inevitably close. Simulations reported in Kunc and Morecroft (2010) show major differences in performance from firms with identical initial resources. Similarly, Holcomb, Holmes and Connelly (2009) demonstrated the

significance of management ability in obtaining value from resources; particularly interesting was their finding that when the quality of resources is lower, the significance of managerial ability generally increases. Whilst their study was sports-based, they express qualified confidence that it may be more widely generalizable.

#### ***3.9.4 Budgetary processes***

The relationship between budgeting and strategic objectives has long been established. Drucker (1993c) stresses the relevance of a managed-expenditures budget in balancing business objectives. Anthony & Young (2003) regard a budget as a plan in monetary terms, and suggest that budgeting is even more vital for nonprofits than for for-profit organizations, partly because nonprofit costs are usually more discretionary, but also because the nature of nonprofits means that the budget should normally require less updating.

Cameron (2010) suggests that how a church acquires and commits income is a function of its conception of its mission, and Oster (1995) devotes a considerable section to the preparation and use of budgets.

Moore (2006) distinguishes between core processes and context processes, and shows how over time an increasing proportion of assets, including people, can inadvertently shift from core processes to context processes where the business no longer has a competitive advantage and outsourcing is called for. Seeking new core activities is necessary but insufficient – it is also essential that context activities should be shed. Moore sees a key part of managing this balance as understanding the difference between mission-critical and supporting activities. This latter point is relevant in the Territory – how far limited resources are devoted to truly mission-critical activities.

### ***3.9.5 Learning support***

This phrase is interpreted here comprehensively, including not only formal training and development, but the encouragement of every type of experiential growth and self-development that supports the organization's mission and goals. Edmondson (2008) shows the contribution of learning to effective execution. Sloan (2006), highlights the importance of informal learning, and reports senior executives attributing their own strategic learning to this.

A considerable literature emphasises the concept of a "learning organization"; for example, Senge (2006) analyzes the concept exhaustively. Hudson (2009), suggests that third-sector organizations undervalue learning, and devotes a chapter to the creation of a learning organization in a nonprofit context. "Learning support" in the current study includes such concepts, but also incorporates top management's encouraging or developing learning transfer and best practice. Hudson stresses the personal contribution of top leadership, seeing their personal example as (p.392) "The single most critical action in creating a learning organization . . . "

Garvin, Edmondson and Gino (2008), in an article describing a tool for assessing the extent of learning within an organization, suggest three building blocks – a supportive environment, clear learning process and practices, and reinforcing leadership behaviour. They also suggest principles for assisting the development of a learning organization.

Angwin, Cummings and Smith (2007), summarizing De Geus (2000) stress how business has moved over a half-century from a base of capital to one of knowledge, and reinforce the importance of knowledge and learning to strategy. However, Crossan and Berdrow (2003) strike a cautionary note, their study of one particular large organization suggesting that the value of particular learning processes depends on the context, and organizational learning must be so managed.

Similarly, Osborne (1996), in examining training in the voluntary sector, shows the issue to be less the availability of suitable content than relating it to the needs of the organization and the individual, and overcoming constraints. Jackson (2005) also supports a closer relationship between training (specifically the continuing education of ministers) and church needs, suggesting that academic and fringe subjects may need to give way to an emphasis on growth and transformation.

An interesting approach to learning is that of Edmondson (2008), who advocates a move from a pure focus on execution in organizations to what she describes (p.62) as “execution-as-learning”, offering four practices to make learning part of the organization’s operational activities, with a focus less on how activities should be performed than on how they should develop.

Another component of learning support is the concept of mentoring. DeLong, Gabarro and Lees (2008) examined mentoring in the context of professional service firms, and suggest mentoring as a way of addressing the alienation that can arise. Importantly, they suggest its importance not just for elite performers, but for the majority; this may be of wider relevance. Lambert (2008) examines the mentoring of church ministers, and (p.159) quotes Parsloe and Wray (2005) as suggesting that it is “one of the top three most widely used approaches by UK businesses, after on-the-job training and training courses.” Singh, Bains and Vinnicombe (2002) particularly examined informal mentoring, and (though the response to their sample was limited) considered it a useful supplement to formal schemes.

Finally, an important part of learning is its use to benefit from failure. McGrath (2011) suggests that (p.77-78) “. . . organizations can’t possibly undertake the risks necessary for innovation and growth if they’re not comfortable with the idea of failing.” Cannon and Edmondson (2005) suggest three key components to achieving such benefits – identifying failure, analyzing failure, and deliberate experimentation. Edmondson (2011) reinforces the same importance. Conversely, Gino and Pisano (2011) stress the importance of learning from successes, no less than from failures.

### ***3.9.6 Reward***

A considerable literature exists on reward on organisations, but it may be a more surprising lever for consideration in a Salvation Army context. Workers in the Salvation Army can be divided into three groups – unpaid volunteers; paid employees; and (in all top line management roles, though not in all support functions) ordained officers. The latter have no right to remuneration, and depend on allowances and accommodation (though the combined effects of these can be significant). They follow a tradition of vocation rather than career or occupation.

Nevertheless, reward is examined here as a lever, for three reasons. First, the number of unordained employees is more than four times the number of officers. Secondly, attitudes of officers to reward should be examined rather than assumed to be dismissive, particularly because intrinsic reward may be important, even where extrinsic reward has a lower priority; for example, Leete (2006) suggests that factors such as workplace ethos, scheduling flexibility, employment stability, and career opportunities may be perceived by many workers as being as important as monetary characteristics. But even extrinsic reward has significance for some officers, concerned (for example) at the costs of supporting children's university education. Thirdly, the Salvation Army depends on volunteers, for whom intrinsic reward is likely to be a significant issue. An example in a Salvation Army context may be found in Gluyas & Foster (2010), who stress the importance of shaping culture in a corps by positive words.

### ***3.9.7 Selection and appointment***

The need to have the right people in place – particularly managers at various levels – is a substantial and recurrent theme of organizational literature.

Drucker (1993b) focuses on selection as a key part of “making strength productive”, which in turn he regards (p.71) as one of the distinctive practices of effective executives:

“”The effective executive fills positions and promotes on the basis of what a man can do. He does not make staffing decisions to minimize weaknesses but to maximize strength.”

Arguably, quality of selection and appointment is even more important in nonprofits, where there may be a reluctance to resort to dismissal for less than effective performance. In addition, measurement difficulties and the additional challenges of balancing competing stakeholders may make nonprofit management particularly challenging.

An important factor is that the Salvation Army enjoys unusual ability to make and change appointments of its officers. This brings a danger of over-relying either on central decision or the co-operation or compliance of the individual. Jackson (2005), in considering Church of England clergy, suggests (p.127) “clarity of purpose” in seeking “the person most likely to lead the healthy development of the church in question so that it grows in size, ministry and kingdom impact.” He sees a system of advertising and competitive interview as most likely to achieve this.

The Territory may have particular moral responsibilities to use the talents of its officers constructively, given the nature of the officers’ covenant; in practice, personal needs (for example, the care of relatives) and views are usually taken into account.

### ***3.9.8 Performance management***

Performance management – formal or informal – may significantly affect mission achievement. Again, the Territory’s relative reluctance to remove or replace individuals may make the quality of performance management even more important.

Forsyth (2006) lists ten positive justifications for performance appraisals, whilst also stressing the negative requirement of respecting employment legislation, and its practical implications such as potential disciplinary action. He emphasises the importance of both an appropriate process and systematic implementation, and the link with training and development. The latter point is supported by Howe (1990) (cited in Sadler (2006)) in providing evidence that exceptional performance can be brought about by training and development, rather than being a binary state that an individual either can provide or cannot; this is particularly significant for the Territory, with its low turnover (other than by death or retirement) of officers.

Hamermesh (1996) emphasizes that speaking the truth – one of the six principles of good management which he identifies – is a prerequisite for performance reviews, and laments the reluctance of otherwise forthright executives to tackle performance issues openly.

Merson (2010) notes the two assumptions behind traditional performance management – that measurement is a key element, and that people respond to reward systems – but stresses the dangers of ignoring what cannot readily be measured. It may be argued, however, that nonprofits face a particular challenge, as intrinsic reward may play a disproportionate role.

Pattison (2000), looking at management in a context of pastoral theology, draws attention to appraisals. In a section which could almost equally be applied in a secular context, he suggests that their social implications should be considered, rather than regarding them simply as a management tool. Interestingly, the section does not specifically discuss the possible conflict between managerial and pastoral roles (commented on by Pallant (2007)), with its particular relevance to appraisals in a church context.



Lyll (2000) in looking at supervision in pastoral studies takes a positive approach (p.317):

“ . . . learners should come to experience supervision as essentially affirmative of their skills and their personhood. Feedback, both positive and negative, there will assuredly be but negative criticism will only be heard in the context of a safe relationship. Coming to an awareness of ‘mistakes’ must not be seen as a threat to the very personhood of the learner, but as an opportunity for learning.”

These principles could apply equally to performance management feedback.

The specific topic of performance management within the Salvation Army receives scant academic coverage. But Pallant’s (2007) study of Divisional Commanders revealed a perception by some of these senior officials of a shortage of direction or being monitored.

### ***3.9.9 Packaged products and concepts***

It is possible for leadership at each hierarchical level to influence results by introducing specific packaged products or concepts. This term has been created within the current study to categorize particular concepts, usually with implementation packages and with some degree of central or outside support, that provide a tested way to address particular issues. They may be developed within the Salvation Army, or adopted (with or without customization) after success in other churches.

Such policies may be adopted at Territorial, Divisional or local level, and may be mandatory or optional. For example, Escott (1996) describes how the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom adopted the (externally-conceived) concept of Church Growth around 1986-87.

In recent years, a wide variety of approaches has existed, and, with increasing diversity in corps activities (Yuill, 2003), the portfolio of concept products used will itself probably become increasingly diverse. Many books exist on such individual concepts,

and Booker & Ireland (2010) examine some of the main contemporary church tools, including general guidance applicable to all such concepts.

One concept discussed by Booker & Ireland that also appeared within the research is that of Natural Church Development (NCD) (Schwarz & Schalk (1998), Schwarz (2007)). As was strongly suggested by one interviewee in the current research, this is more a philosophy than a product; the title of this lever was amended to reflect this point. Gluyas & Foster (2010) stress the value of NCD in obtaining and addressing shared ownership of the strengths and weaknesses of a corps.

### ***3.9.10 Prayer***

Prayer is unlikely ever to be significant in business literature. Indeed, even books covering management aspects of churches appear to find it of limited direct relevance; thus the subject is not indexed at all in Jeavons (1994) or Harris (1998), nor in the volume by Cameron and others (2005) on researching local churches.

However, prayer is seen as fundamental in religious organizations. Chalke & Watkis (2006) argue that the church's task requires simultaneous deployment of determined prayer and persuasive action – “Prayer and engagement not only go together – they fuel and sustain one another” (p.150). Oswald & Friedrich (1996) give prayer a prime role in discerning a congregation's future. Yuill (1994) states (p.115) that: “It is time to rediscover the place and the power of prayer if we are to be successful in spiritual warfare.”

Mc Gavran - a seminal author on church growth and a partial subject of Escott (1996) – suggests (McGavran & Arn (1976)) that prayer is one of five essential qualities in the leadership of church growth. McGavran (1990) goes further (p.134) - “In hundreds of instances, prayer has brought revival” – albeit also stressing dependence on God's initiative.

Even Christians may differ in their views on the practical implications of prayer (this was evidenced to a minor degree during the current research), but it is clearly a highly significant factor in a church context.

Including prayer as a lever resulted from comments made in the first stage of the pilot study. During the course of the main study, however, suggestions were made that this should not be seen alone, but in conjunction with reliance on the Bible, or more widely – as suggested in one interview – as part of a spiritual climate. Clifton (2010, Vol. 2) stresses the importance of spiritual health for spiritual leaders.

### ***3.9.11 Faith***

At a late stage in the research, faith was suggested for consideration as a lever. When used in its religious sense, faith is integral to the nature and ethos of the Salvation Army. Nevertheless, the researcher could not consider it as a specific lever or tool available to an individual to influence mission results. It is true that faith may have an important impact, for example in motivation, but the researcher considered that for the purposes of a practical taxonomy, this could best be treated as a component of the spiritual climate, to which the topic of prayer (as discussed in subsection 3.9.10 ) subsequently progressed.

## **3.10 Synthesis of the literature review**

This Section summarises the essence of the results of the literature review, to highlight the impact of the review on the research.

### ***3.10.1 Influential levers – the concept***

Influential levers are central to the research, and the literature proved invaluable in developing the concept, by examining the nearest concepts to it, and justifying its creation as a new construct. The most relevant existing approaches included the levers

found in Patel (2005) and the strategic levers in Grossman and Rangan (2001). The concept of management control (as explained in Berry, Broadbent and Otley (2005) and in Anthony and Young (2003)) was closely related, but did not meet the need envisaged for a taxonomy which included non-restrictive and less measurable concepts such as leadership and appointment or selection. Thus the review demonstrated that despite the variety of lever-type concepts, there was no model suited to the practical demands of the current research.

A gap in the relevant management literature was therefore evident that could usefully be filled; thus the literature review proved important in informing the creation of the new concept.

The coverage of individual influential levers from the literature is also important, although (as explained) the breadth of topics which they represent provides a practical limit on the extent of coverage of each. The coverage in this Chapter has demonstrated the evidence of the literature review that each of the levers is important; but strategic planning, leadership and management involved fuller coverage in that review, which was proved justifiable by the subsequent field research. In the case of strategic planning this is because the field research revealed concerns about both the extent of its practice, and the nature of the planning required; in the case of leadership, this was because the topic was regarded as particularly important for mission success; in the case of management, this was because there was a widespread belief in its necessity, coupled with concerns about its relationship with religious primacy.

The literature in relation to the remaining influential levers proved less significant, but nevertheless provided a useful background to the examination of those levers.

### ***3.10.2 Salvation Army literature***

The literature review highlighted the limited amount of Salvation Army literature that closely addressed most of the influential levers, or their collective impact, although

useful examples were identified, and two of the sources (Escott (1996) and Pallant (2007)) proved significant in the rest of the thesis, in terms of methodology and content.

### ***3.10.3 Culture***

The Salvation Army, including the Territory, has a strong culture, which provides both benefits and challenges. The literature sheds useful light on this, not least the possible impact of the tendency described by Schein (1990) in Section 3.5 for values to become assumptions.

Subsection 10.4.3 gives examples that might be regarded as illustrating this path, including a further potential transition into regulations; some topics such as attending football matches are no longer problematic, but others such as the use of alcohol are still liable to be regarded as disciplinary matters.

### ***3.10.4 Mission, vision, values***

These issues are widely covered in the management literature, examples being cited earlier in Section 3.6. The concepts are generally recognized as valuable, but just as Hamermesh (1996) draws attention (p.84) to the need for values “to be rooted in the reality of how the business and its leaders actually behave”, so it is important for all three concepts to be known, understood and consistently applied, if they are to add value.

The literature review outlines the Territory’s mission, vision and value statements (subsections 3.6.2, 3.6.3 and 3.6.4), and subsection 10.4.4 examines the implications of the field research.

### ***3.10.5 Setting goals and measurement***

Measurement may be regarded as a fundamental element of management, and it is perhaps unsurprising that the reservations which exist about management in churches seem particularly strong in relation to measurement and to the setting of goals. As the literature review suggests (Section 3.8), the balance of opinion is a qualified acceptance of such concepts. Expressed opinions in the Salvation Army confirm this general view, for example in Larsson (1998) and Clifton (2010); and Drucker (1993c), cited in Section 3.8, provides a simple, cogent and practical assessment of what can and cannot be done. Subsection 10.4.5 relates these concepts to the field research.

### ***3.10.6 Strategy, strategic planning, strategic focus and the third sector***

Strategic planning, as one of the identified levers, is dealt with initially in this subsection, but the subsection goes on to consider strategy itself, and strategic focus, with particular issues for churches and other third sector organizations.

The literature on strategic planning is extensive, and (as amply demonstrated by Mintzberg (2004) and Mintzberg et al (2009)) contains a variety of significantly different approaches, the popularity of which has varied over time. In particular, the contribution of earlier writers such as Steiner (1979) and Ansoff (1986) runs a risk of being unnecessarily discredited by overlooking the need to take current more dynamic circumstances into account if it is to be effectively employed. A synthesis of the various approaches suggests that the challenge is to obtain the benefits of a considered and appropriately structured theme, whilst recognizing the need for a constantly dynamic and responsive approach that also allows for a degree of devolution suited to the organization's mission and environment. Of particular relevance to the Territory is the contingency approach shown in Mintzberg (2004), which relates strategic planning to his taxonomy of five organizational forms, providing a useful touchstone for the field research.

A clear thread in the strategic planning literature is the importance of execution, frequently stressed (for example, by Rumelt (2011) , Birnik and Moat (2008) and Neilson, Martin and Powers (2008)) but particularly emphasized by the suggestion of Martin (2010) that execution cannot be separated from strategy. Execution of strategy in the Territory is, of course, at the essence of the current research).

Although the bulk of the literature on strategic planning focuses primarily on businesses, much of it also has at least some relevance to nonprofits including churches. There is also useful literature specifically on nonprofits (such as Oster (1995)) and churches (such as Miller (2002)). Both Telfer (2008) and Yuill (2003) use their Salvation Army background to discuss strategic planning approaches for churches.

Overall, the strategic planning literature provides a viable set of templates against which the field research can be considered in Section 10.4.6.

The literature review (in particular, Sections 3.5, 3.6 (especially subsection 3.6.5) and 3.9) draws attention to the issues of strategic clarity and of factors which can lead to a reduction in strategic focus. The particular nature of the third sector – not least its specific challenges in clarifying mission and its more complex stakeholder relationships – are likely to exacerbate this problem. For example, Yuill (2003) showed how the reduced hierarchy in the Salvation Army contributed to a reduction of consistency in its operational model. This could result in reduced strategic focus at a collective level. This is an important issue, examined further in Chapter 9 (subsection 9.2.4) and Chapter 10 (subsection 10.4.6).

Subsection 10.4.6 also examines the evidence from the field research in relation to the implications of the taxonomy of organizational forms quoted in Mintzberg (1994), and cited in subsection 3.9.1.

### ***3.10.7 Leadership***

Leadership is widely covered in the literature, unsurprisingly in view of the importance almost invariably placed on it (for example, by Mintzberg (1998), Hudson (2003), Beer (2009) and Colville and Murphy (2006)); consequently this literature review has aimed at identifying key threads rather than attempting to be comprehensive.

The concept of leadership outlined by Bains (2007) – with its emphases on accepting (p.68) “the complexity and messiness of human behaviour”, on relating to the followers, and on the teaching element of leadership – is particularly relevant to the Territory, with its challenges of combining managerial and pastoral relationships between the same individuals, exacerbated by a hierarchical structure and history. Subsection 10.4.7 applies this aspect of the literature to the field research.

The literature review showed both the interrelationship of leadership and management (for example, in Mintzberg (1998)) and their distinction (for example, in Hudson (2009)). It is interesting to note that the present field research confirms the situation noted by Pattison (2000) that leadership tends to be more accepted in churches than does management; for example, Pallant (2007)’s thoughtful review of the work of Divisional Commanders outlines reservations on any insufficiently critical use of management within the Salvation Army. The same different attitude to leadership and management was also evident in some of the interviews. Subsection 10.4.7 describes the evidence from the field research, confirming both an appreciation of the importance of management and a concern not to let it become the driving force in a faith organization.

Subsection 3.9.2 examines leadership in the literature, both inside and beyond the third sector. Within the Salvation Army, Hill (2006), Yuill (2003), The Salvation Army (2008), Peacock (2005) and Street (2003) demonstrate its importance, and the theme of servant leadership is increasingly visible, as it is (Greenleaf (1998)) in a wider arena. This might reasonably be expected to lead to an increased emphasis – in the terms of



Mintzberg (2002) – on engaging management, rather than heroic management; this is considered in subsection 10.4.7.

As mentioned in subsection 3.9.2, the concept of distributed leadership (propounded by Spillane (2006), with the conceptual literature reviewed by Bolden (2012)) is also relevant, though some key aspects (for example, followership) were not examined specifically in the context of this research, and could justify further study (see subsection 10.5.7)

The overall concept of leadership is shown by the field research as one of the most critical issues in the Territory, and its implications are examined in Chapter 7 (subsection 7.11.5) and Chapter 10 (subsection 10.4.7).

### ***3.10.8 Strategic human resource management***

Human resource management was not assessed as an influential lever, as the researcher considered it more useful and practicable to treat separately as levers some of its key components – leadership and management; learning support; reward; selection and appointment; and performance management. Nevertheless, the collective concept of the importance of human resource management to strategic needs merits discussion.

As mentioned in subsection 3.9.1, Ulrich (1998) is a seminal source on the importance of the strategic use of human resource management as as a key enabler for implementing strategy successfully, which is itself shown as essential by sources such as Martin (2007) and Rumelt (2011). The field research demonstrated the Territory's quest for progress in this field and the particular difficulties it faces, as is outlined in subsection 10.4.8.

### ***3.10.9 Founder influence***

Section 3.5 explains the issue of founder influence. Although much of the literature on this topic relates to businesses, its relevance to the Territory is important given the continued reminders of the Salvation Army's founder, and is further commented upon in Section 10.4.9.

### ***3.10.10 Summary of literature synthesis***

Whilst the Salvation Army is particularly distinctive, and therefore differs significantly in many respects from other churches, from nonprofits generally, and especially from businesses, material from the academic and other literature provided a crucial foundation upon which the research could be built. It was clear that a gap existed which the concept of influential levers could address; and this supplied a basis for the theory formulation and the field research, which together provide a workable and theoretically sound construct which has addressed the identified gap in the literature.

The most significant relationships between the literature review and the field research are examined in Section 10.4. These consist of the concept of individual levers; culture; mission, vision and values; setting goals and measurement; strategy, strategic planning, strategic focus and the third sector; leadership; strategic human resource management; and founder influence.

## **3.11 Conclusion**

This Chapter has set out relevant literature as a background for the research. As explained at the outset, the range of significant topics relevant to this research limits the extent to which each can appropriately be covered or discussed. Nevertheless, some important relationships have emerged between the literature review and the field research. These were outlined in Section 3.10, and their relationships with the findings of the field research are discussed in Section 10.4

Although there are overlaps this Chapter does not include a review of the relevant literature on research methodology. This will be addressed in Chapter 4.

## **CHAPTER 4 – METHODOLOGY ADOPTED**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The methodology for this research evolved to reflect practicalities, particularly limited response rates and the reluctance or inability of some of the Divisional Commanders approached to commit to participation themselves and to allow their teams to participate. The starting approach is described in this extract from the Abstract in the original research proposal.

“An empirical and primarily phenomenological approach will use cross-sectional case studies, documentary evidence, and a combination of semi-structured interviews and questionnaire surveys. A simple quantitative tool based on available data will also be used. Evidence of the experience of comparable charitable organizations with similar issues will be sought from the literature, as will the degree of applicability of traditional business approaches.”

### **4.2 Approach to the research – an overview**

The structure of this Section is based (with appropriate amendments) on a checklist in Cameron (2005) which was not used as a basis for the research, but provides a convenient framework for its review.

#### ***4.2.1 The researcher***

The researcher spent his first 27 years in the Salvation Army, and after a break has been an adherent member for over 20 years. This brings valuable knowledge of the organization’s history, culture, practices and terminology – the view was sometimes expressed by respondents that understanding the organization’s practices, culture and terminology would have been a formidable barrier for someone without such background. However, this brought a concomitant danger of reduced objectivity, the

main defences against this being the variety of respondents in the research design, as well as constant awareness and continuous self-examination on the part of the researcher.

#### ***4.2.2 The purpose of the research, the research question, and agreeing the research question***

The suggestion behind the research came via the initial sponsor, the Territory's then Secretary for Programme. The topic developed through discussion between the researcher, his then mentor, and representatives of the Territory, leading to the research question. This was not formally amended subsequently, but several factors – difficulty in practically defining and categorizing conurbations, growing evidence from the research process, and developing negotiations on the sample – all suggested conurbations to be an impracticable focus for the research, and that instead the relationship between individual units should be examined, recognizing a variety of geographical and other relationships, including conurbations.

The research question, aims and objectives are set out in Section 1.2.

#### ***4.2.3 Reviewing existing knowledge***

A normal research process was followed to establish relevant existing knowledge, though an indefinite call on the Salvation Army for detailed information was impracticable. The results of the literature search appear in Chapter 3, in the current Chapter, and to a lesser extent in other Chapters.

#### ***4.2.4 Selecting disciplines and methods***

This is discussed in other sections of this Chapter.

#### ***4.2.5 Learning or piloting the methods***

The first stage of the pilot study was designed partly to assist in designing research instruments for the second stage, but also to provide experience of research interviewing, thus supplementing and focusing the researcher's experience of non-research interviewing. This stage consisted of four interviews with officials in a single Divisional Headquarters, plus an interview with two Territorial Headquarters officials.

This was followed by the second stage, in a different Division, using what was provisionally intended as the full methodology for the Divisional sections of the main study. Apart from suggesting minor methodological changes, this stage proved the suitability of the proposed methodology for extension to the main study.

#### ***4.2.6 Gaining access***

Following an approach by the researcher to the Salvation Army and consequent meetings, access and co-operation were agreed for the research; this was translated into a Letter of Support (appearing as Appendix A), which also confirmed the independence of the researcher's conclusions.

Access was provided to senior Territorial Headquarters officials, who facilitated introduction to Divisional Commanders, as well as providing appropriate documents and statistics. However, research ethics and the Territory's managerial relationships meant that although senior officials could provide encouragement to participation, and could lead by example, Divisional Commanders would participate only if they agreed to do so, as would their subordinates.

This proved a major challenge to the research, and materially limited both the size and the representativeness of the sample. Consequent limitations on sample size also meant that the need for confidentiality placed limitations on data analysis and display.

In addition to workload pressures, one possible factor in reluctance to participate, was a perceived data fatigue in general within the organization, and a pushback based on seeing requests for information as a dubious use of time, potentially detrimental to operational mission.

#### ***4.2.7 Agreeing what benefits the organization will obtain from the research***

The research was identified as original, and provided a unique and independent opportunity for the views of leaders and the led in this distinctive organization to comment on managerial issues critical to its mission. In agreeing to the current research, the Territory accepted the researcher's belief that such research could be directly relevant and useful to the Territory, and might be of indicative value to the Salvation Army elsewhere.

#### ***4.2.8 Conveying the researcher's identity and purpose***

The researcher's identity was made clear to invited participants, whether by interview or questionnaire, as was the purpose of the research. Divisional Commanders invited to participate received an exploratory interview, following an introductory e-mail.

#### ***4.2.9 Gathering and analyzing data***

This topic is covered fully in this Chapter and in Chapters 5 to 9 inclusive.

#### ***4.2.10 Presenting the research***

This thesis is the prime output from the research. However, its practical utility is important, and the researcher also undertook to provide an executive summary and to offer a presentation to senior officials of the Territory, as well as making a shorter summary available for any interested participant. The researcher has now been asked to present the work to the Territory's Cabinet of senior officials.

### **4.3 Refinement of the list of influential levers**

The following provisional list of influential levers was assembled, based on the support from the literature mentioned in Chapter 3, and recognizing that the research might identify unsuspected levers, or different ways in which identified levers could be used:

- Strategic planning
- Leadership
- Management
- Resource allocation
- Budgetary processes
- Learning support
- Reward
- Selection and appointment
- Performance management
- Concept products

As the research proceeded, particularly in the light of the evidence of the pilot study (as described in Chapter 5), amendments were made to this provisional list:

- Resource allocation was renamed Resource availability, distinguishing overall adequacy or inadequacy of resources (to which the revised term was applied) from the separate lever of Budgetary processes (governing allocation).
- Concept products (seen from the outset as a less than satisfactory term) was replaced (as the researcher's understanding of the lever grew) first by Packaged programmes, then by Packaged programmes and concepts.
- An additional category of Prayer was added following the first stage of the pilot study, on the suggestion of respondents. The researcher was initially reluctant to add this lever, believing that the study should focus on temporal influences, but decided that it would be inappropriate to exclude a factor seen by respondents as critical. Subsequent respondent views supported this



decision. During the main study Bible study was also proposed as a lever, but one respondent suggested that both these and more might be brought together into a “spiritual climate”. This effectively articulated a belief evident from other respondents.

- The researcher asked interview respondents to suggest additional levers, but, disappointingly, except for Prayer and ideas for its expansion, no suggestions were forthcoming. The view was commonly expressed that the list seemed comprehensive. This may have resulted from the breadth of some levers; for example, communication, which might otherwise have been an additional lever, could be regarded as within the scope of management, or of leadership. Such breadth means that some potential richness of detail may have been lost; but extending the list would also have extended both the questionnaires and the interviews, adversely affecting practicability.

This process provided a viable and effective set of influential levers within the limits of the research. As explained in Section 10.3.3, other categories of lever are possible, but those used show resonance with the views of respondents.

#### **4.4 Literature on research methodology**

##### ***4.4.1 Literature on qualitative and quantitative research and the research paradigm***

Choosing a positivist or phenomenological paradigm is often seen as a key factor in a research project, but, as Remenyi and others (1998) suggest, they are better viewed as related rather than discrete approaches. It is not proposed to repeat in this thesis those aspects of the literature that are widely accepted in the research community, except for key requirements such as reliability, validity, generalizability and other aspects where there is a distinctive relevance to the current research.

A considerable literature – Sumner (2006) is one example – suggests the usefulness of qualitative research in social research situations, and organizational studies including

the current research fall within that category. Swinton and Mowat (2006) stress, however, that qualitative research takes place (p.34) within “an interpretative paradigm”, with a feature of this being the concept of constructionism, emphasizing the inevitable involvement of the researcher and the researcher’s own background. Indeed, Swinton and Mowat quote (p.33) McLeod as including within the types of knowledge available from qualitative research that of “reflexive knowing”, acquired by researchers’ inward evaluation of their own approach to understanding.

Further light is shed on the same concept by Swinton and Mowat’s emphasis on the distinction between nomothetic knowledge (the foundation for which is scientific truth, supported by principles of falsifiability, replicability and generalizability) and ideographic knowledge (founded rather on the concept of unique experiences, so that not only will different people interpret an event differently, so will the same person if an event is repeated). The two forms of knowledge are however understood by Swinton and Mowat not as discrete concepts, but as ends of a continuum, with an optimal understanding being at some point in between. The view of these authors is that description, interpretation and understanding are essential features of qualitative research.

#### ***4.4.2 Literature on comparative overall research methodology***

Various academic theses include content and methodological elements that relate to some degree to the current research,

Penn (1993) examined the post-war management of voluntary organisations, looking particularly at national/local relationships, involving the work of the Management Development Unit of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, and focussing particularly on a single organisation (The Cyrenians) and its predecessor. Penn’s sources were primarily published or from documentary records, but she also interviewed 20 individuals. The general approach is longitudinal rather than cross-sectional, and there is little direct relevance to the current research.

Hayes (1993) (subsequently published in book form as Hayes (1996)) examined management, control and accountability in Irish voluntary organizations. She examined 10 organisations in Ireland, but although 7 were national organizations, even the largest financially (with an income of 2.9m IR pounds) was much smaller than the Territory and possibly less complex, so direct relevance is limited. She aimed for 4 interviews with each respondent organisation, as well as a preliminary phase of interviewing 19 respondents from 15 organizations to obtain background for the main study.

McConchie (1996) examined patterns of control in retail banks in Britain, France and Germany, interviewing 18 bank executives and 7 academic and other experts. The bank respondents were executives or strategic thinkers, rather than from different levels in the retail networks. Compared with the current study, therefore, the focus was on breadth of organization and on central views rather than on multi-level experience and views. Additionally, the research was not focused on nonprofits.

The same proviso applies to Marginson (1996), who examined the relationship between strategy and management control systems in a telecoms subsidiary; a total of 47 interviews (including initial interviews) were supplemented by questionnaires to test hypotheses.

The proviso also applies to Longden (1993), who examined the relationship between strategy and the design of control systems. After an initial analysis, he examined four companies, each representing a different profile of environmental change, using interviews and documentation. Wood (1995) examined the role of information and management systems in 24 large UK organisations, interviewing 20 chief executive officers and 52 other directors, and analysing 180 questionnaires. He also carried out performance data analysis from publicly available databases. The interviews and questionnaires (in a similar manner to that adopted by McConchie) focused on strategic planners and business development directors; and the analysis was at business unit level, unlike the current research.

Barman and Chaves (2001) accompanied their desk research by interviews with 24 senior central executives of the United Church of Christ. Whilst that organization has similarities with the Territory, that research focussed on central executives rather than addressing several hierarchical levels.

Young (2001) and his collaborators accompanied archival research on Girls Incorporated with telephone and personal interviews with “more than a dozen” key officials; they also conducted interviews with another organization and other officials, as well as archival information, fax and email surveys and focus groups.

Green and others (2001) looked at how effectiveness could be affected by relationships between board members and chief professional officers in a single nonprofit with geographical units, using a questionnaire of 56 statements in 10 categories. A response rate of 34% gave 123 usable questionnaires from board members; and there were 11 responses from the 21 chief professional officers. This allowed intra-group and inter-group comparisons of perceived desirable and perceived actual behaviours. This study has some comparability with the current one, but focused on the impact on effectiveness of the relationships between those two levels. This differs from the present study, which emphasizes a variety of influential levers available to managers.

As described in Section 3.8, Smith, Carson and Alexander (1984), studied 50 United Methodist ministers in Ohio, over a 20 year period, measuring their performance by attendances, membership, property value and giving, including taking account of moves between churches. This methodology was greater than practicable for the current research.

Thus (with the partial exception of Barman and Chaves, of Green and others, and of Smith, Carson and Alexander) none of these studies is close to the currently study that examines multiple management levels in a large, partially devolved nonprofit

organisation. Their methodologies are therefore indicative of possibilities, rather than analogies.

Several academic studies based partially or entirely on Salvation Army subjects throw some light on how research might be carried on in that organization.

Of these studies, two are the most relevant.

Escott (1996), then a serving Salvation Army officer, examined the influence of Church Growth theories on the Territory. As well as considering historical, theological and practical implications, he developed a simple model to assess growth over a 10-year period, and used questionnaires (similar in length to the current leaders' questionnaire, but with a differing style and content). His Growth Index formula has been used in the current research, both in its original form and in modified versions. He compared features of high and low growth individual corps (though in a period of overall numerical decline in the variable measured – the number of soldiers – the term “growth” was relative), accepting the need for judgment; for example, respondents were asked to assess their own theological positioning and also that of the corps overall. Although some factors are relevant to the current research, the approach does not cover the full range of levers that can be proactively employed managerially at each level to help promote all aspects of the Territory's mission.

The other useful study for the current research is that of Pallant (2007), examining the work of Divisional Commanders both in the Territory and internationally, using qualitative semi-structured interviews. As well as providing a valuable picture from an experienced officer of their attitudes and working practices, this study usefully highlights the Salvation Army background and provides some methodological insight, in particular into issues of access to Divisional Commanders. Its primary research was limited in breadth, however, using only 10 respondents, half of them in the Territory; but it provides complementary information and discussion, and useful confirmation of some themes from the current research.

Methodologies adopted for both these research projects were seen as illuminative, both in overall methodology and in specific research methods. Others were of less direct value.

For example, Hill (1985) used a combination of document search, 22 interviews and a questionnaire sample of 1,005. All three methods have parallels in the current research, though document search has a very minor role.

Green (1986) sought practical guidance for leaders in his subject Division; his methodology appears to have been based on managerial knowledge and processes, giving little direct relevance to the current research. A similar assessment on methodological relevance applies to the research of Robinson (1987), based on two specific identified Canadian corps.

Court (1993) used a combination of three methods, namely observation, interviews and document analysis, in his comparative study of the Salvation Army's Canada and Bermuda Territory and a Canadian Board of education with similar characteristics.

Finally, as mentioned in Section 3.4, Simpson (1998) examined visionary planning within the Salvation Army, based on documentation and broad questions accompanying its collection.

#### ***4.4.3 Literature on specific research methods***

An important contribution of the literature relates to the specific research methods adopted for the methodology within the current study, reflecting both the phenomenological approach and the significant reliance on qualitative data that was confirmed as the research proceeded.

Questionnaires formed an important aspect of the methodology, not only to augment and partially triangulate the interviews, but also to overcome the problem with senior-level interviews noted by Richter (2004) of a tendency (p.174) “to privilege ‘official’ accounts of denominational culture, which may, or may not, be reflected at a more grassroots level.”

Remenyi (1998) provides general coverage on the use of questionnaires, and Silverman refers to the topic in several different works (2001, 2004 and 2005), but in none of them is the coverage extensive. De Vaus (2002) uses an analysis from Dillman (1978), who identifies five types of question content

- Behaviour – what people do
- Beliefs – what people think is true or false
- Knowledge – what people know about facts, and the accuracy of their beliefs
- Attitudes – what people think is desirable
- Attributes – the characteristics of people responding.

The current research involves minor detail of attributes (principally, if not entirely, for demographic analysis), but focuses on beliefs, knowledge and attitudes. The behaviour of individuals is not directly addressed, though in some cases the responses of individuals may reflect their perceptions of their own and others’ behaviour.

De Vaus also comments on question design, in respect of which he suggests six principles, all of which were taken into account in the current research:

- Reliability
- Validity
- Discrimination
- Response rate
- Same meaning for all respondents
- Relevance.

De Vaus distinguishes between Likert rating scales (with attitudinal attributes such as Strongly agree, Agree) and semantic differential rating scales (with opposing adjectives at each end). He expresses no opinion, and a reasonable inference is that he would regard the choice as contingent on the situation.

The number of response categories on a questionnaire scale is, as De Vaus suggests, much debated in the literature, with the advantages and disadvantages of odd as opposed to even numbers being a key element – in other words, is a “middle” option offered? For the current research, a seven-point scale was chosen. This was a judgment on its greater potential for discrimination. Such an odd-number scale includes a middle position, addressing the risk (for which De Vaus cites Converse and Presser and others) of artificially creating a directional opinion; a middle position does, however, create an alternative risk of respondents’ choosing the safe course by indiscriminately opting for the middle. Accordingly, a variant of a semantic differentiated rating scale was employed, with a labelled “neutral” middle point, which it was hoped would encourage more discriminatory use of the scale, by encouraging “shades of the middle”. The dangers were recognized, but experience with the pilot study (where respondents used the full range) encouraged the use of this concept in the main study.

Another important choice identified by De Vaus and faced by the researcher was whether to include a “Don’t know” option; this was decided against, whilst recognizing the dangers. It was unlikely that leaders (let alone Divisional Commanders) would lack knowledge of the substance of the questions, and offering the option might encourage an easy way out. A respondent who was genuinely unable to answer could simply omit that particular question, whilst continuing with the questionnaire – this option was made clear in the guidance notes, and sometimes adopted by respondents. For local questionnaires a lack of knowledge was conceivable, but opting-out was still possible.

De Vaus (2002) also highlights the need to convert concepts within surveys into measurable form, by clarifying the concept, and developing and evaluating indicators.



He also suggests using well-established indicators where they exist. However, the present research explored relatively new territory, and no suitable set of existing indicators was found.

Bailey and Avery (1998), outline the methodology used in one research programme on strategy development, and present the questionnaire used, involving 36 questions, with a 7-point response scale, together with a scoring sheet and a profile presentation technique.

Escott (1996) obtained, after a pilot study, a 42% response rate to his 25-page questionnaire sent to 151 Salvation Army corps. He received 63 responses, with an average of 60 responses to each question. His questionnaire was based on that used by Beasley-Murray and Wilkinson (1981) in looking at Baptist churches; a range of question formats was used, some open, some closed, some statistical. Escott recognized the questionnaire as substantial; and the requirement for statistical information was significant, though much of this may have been available from existing records.

Al-Dahiyat (2003) used a questionnaire of 8 pages, with 86 items. He used 7-point scales, and mainly closed-ended questions. He also, relying on Emery & Cooper (1991) used itemized scales where he could, to give additional information to respondents, and help establish a consistent frame of reference. He paid attention, too, to question flow, quoting Dillman (1978), including sequencing early both those questions of most interest to respondents, and those most relevant to the survey.

Question structuring in the current research involved the data necessary to provide an understanding of the circumstances of each respondent's corps, centre or Division; an examination of perceived mission success (past, present and future); and then a series of questions intended to obtain views on the various levers, rearranged into practically focused topics, such as "How the Salvation Army leads and manages" and "How the Salvation Army remunerates, rewards and motivates officers and employees".

After each section, and at the end of the questionnaire, a space was left for freeform comments.

The questionnaires also responded to the issue raised by Barman and Chaves (2001), as to whether the degree of connectedness between local and regional units and between regional and national units necessarily correlates with the connectedness felt between national and local units. In the current research, leaders were asked not only about downward relationships and those with Divisional Headquarters, but also with Territorial Headquarters.

All questionnaire respondents were in Divisions where the Divisional Commander had agreed to participate, and his or her explicit support was felt likely to help sustain a positive response rate.

Individual types of questionnaire are commented upon below, and pro formas of Questionnaires are included in Appendices B, C and D for the pilot study, and G, H and I for the main study.

#### ***4.4.4 Interviews***

The literature contains many references to how interactions within interviews may be most effectively managed. Rubin and Rubin (2005) focus on this issue, with an end-to-end process. Silverman (2001) outlines the possible contribution of conversation analysis and discourse analysis to qualitative research, whilst concluding that their use should not be seen as mandatory, and that their potential value to each research topic is contingent. Both topics are covered in more detail by Heritage and Potter respectively, in a work edited by Silverman (2004), and also in Bryman and Bell (2007). Pallant (2007) considered various analytical methods, but eventually adopted template analysis.

The use of such methods was examined for the current research, but was not thought justified. Respondents were being asked to comment on relatively clearly identified and

specified concrete topics in a confidential context, where they were unlikely either consciously or unconsciously to distort their views. The researcher believed, therefore, that the use of relatively complex analytical techniques would mean an unjustified data analysis burden; a reduction in either or both of the number and length of the interviews; and additional data which would not materially further the research.

#### ***4.4.5 Literature on research ethics***

De Vaus (2002) highlights five responsibilities generally found in professional ethics codes, namely

- Voluntary participation
- Informed consent
- No harm
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Privacy.

All five were considered in the current research, and are now individually examined.

Voluntary participation was stressed throughout, as a requirement of the University's ethics code, and as a pre-requisite for Territorial involvement. A line was carefully drawn between encouragement by line managers to participate (primarily by personal example) and any danger of coercion. The fact that most invitees decided not to participate suggests that pressure was not perceived.

All invitees were briefed on the nature and purpose of the project, the likely time commitment, and confidentiality. Actual participation was then accepted as consent. Similarly, the recording of interviews was preceded by an explanation of their process and purpose, and of the interviewee's right to decline; consent to recording was invariably given.

Interview and questionnaire content was considered and thought unlikely to create risks of harm to respondents. In some cases the questions might cause introspection, but it was clearly established that no part of the process would judge individuals.

Inevitably, the research made calls upon participants' time. This was thought justified, given the potential benefits for the Territory. Additionally, an individual's allocating an hour's commitment to a structured consideration of matters germane to his or her own work or mission could be of personal and local benefit too.

#### ***4.4.6 Confidentiality and privacy***

The need for confidentiality is frequently expressed in the literature, for example Corbin & Strauss (2008). One local questionnaire respondent indicated that his or her participation would not have been forthcoming in the absence of assured confidentiality.

Court (1994) saw confidentiality as particularly important to avoid a reluctance for individuals to confide, given his own membership of the organization. This was equally important for the current research, but assurances were given, and the researcher received no comments which suggested that his own relationship with the Territory created concerns.

Privacy was ensured as far as was practicable. In a busy Divisional Headquarters it was not possible to hide the fact that individuals were being interviewed, but except for one interview in a conference area, all interviews took place in closed offices or conference rooms. Transcripts were sent to participants directly. Questionnaire responses were sent directly to the researcher, and no details of who had responded were revealed to anyone, even in those cases where a husband and wife both responded.

The need to ensure confidentiality means that, to prevent possible identification, data from individual units cannot be individually shown in the thesis. This is not considered to affect the results or conclusions reached.

#### ***4.4.7 Quality, reliability, validity and generalizability***

Corbin & Strauss (2008) quote Seale on the elusive nature of quality, which is more easily recognized than defined, and suggest that quality differs from validity (p.301) through possessing “an innovative, thoughtful, and creative component”.

Writers such as Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002), Silverman (2001), Hussey & Hussey (1997), Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003), Denscombe (2007) and Mason (2002) draw attention to what Mason calls the “established measures” of validity, generalizability and reliability. Many other commentators (such as De Vaus (2002) and Jupp (2006) stress the importance of reliability and validity.

Swinton and Mowat (2006) quote the view of Lincoln and Guba that a qualitative researcher’s prime task is to describe a situation, rendering generalizability as a secondary issue; but qualify this view by accepting that such research may nevertheless include insights that could contribute to theory beyond the immediate study. This approach was seen as realistic in the current research. Given the Territory’s distinctiveness and the degree of heterogeneity within it, wider generalizability is likely to be limited, even apart from the contingency-based nature of any qualitative research, and the dangers of sample bias and non-response bias described later in this subsection. But there may be indicative relevance to other organizations such as multiple-outlet churches or social organizations, and particularly to the Salvation Army elsewhere in the world.

The importance of validity is widely stressed in the literature. Jupp (2006) defines the concept in terms of how far research conclusions accurately indicate what happened and why. Alternatively, Hammersley, quoted in Corbin & Strauss (2008) looks rather at whether the account given represents the phenomenon itself. Schwandt (2007) links the term with the concept of findings being true and certain, but also draws attention to the challenges to the concept, including whether objective reality exists, and (if so) its attainability by human research. Mason (2002) challenges how far triangulation

satisfies the need for validity, arguing that different methods are more likely to answer different research questions or highlight different research phenomena. Thus she suggests that triangulating methods assists validity indirectly, by encouraging a multi-dimensional approach. Silverman (2001) argues the importance of validity in both quantitative and qualitative studies, and outlines some of the measures available to achieve it, but stresses that not all the tools used in quantitative studies are relevant to qualitative research.

De Vaus (2002) highlights non-response bias and non-probability sampling as being potential issues. Both presented challenges to the current research. The selection of Divisions proved to be possible only on a non-random sampling basis, and the balance of questionnaire responses and non-responses even within that sample may have been biased; for example, 14 of the 26 respondents to Divisional Commander and leaders' questionnaires were graduates, which may not represent the mean of the population sampled.

Jupp (2006) defines reliability in terms of consistency of results from a measuring instrument. Schwandt (2007) sees replicability by another researcher as key, though also raising the possible argument that the concept may be seen as fictional in qualitative studies, given the impracticability of fully replicating field studies. Silverman (2001) also describes – whilst refuting – the argument that the attribute is of value only in positivist studies. Constructively, he outlines several tools with which the needs of reliability can be satisfied.

Seale (1999) discusses the use of member validation techniques, and explains that a variety of techniques of varying efficacy exist. Bryman and Bell (2007) agree that potential value exists, but stress the dangers of censorship if the form of validation uses senior officials, who may have a power of veto.

All four attributes examined in this sub-section provided challenges for this primarily qualitative study, especially into a distinctive organization such as the Territory and

(unavoidably) with limited and non-random samples. The research design provided, however, for evidence from each organizational level, so that a degree of triangulation was possible. Further and more specific internal studies (as suggested in Section 10.5.5), might use representative and wider samples; this could increase reliability, validity and perhaps quality, though generalizability might still be limited.

#### **4.5 Summary of research paradigm and methodology**

From the outset, the research question and objectives suggested the need for an empirical study, with a primarily phenomenological paradigm.

Qualitative research would be used to discover and understand perceptions (at each key organizational level), and a simple quantitative tool would be used to assess and compare the degree of successful performance over time, in conjunction with secondary data.

The interview content data and the survey questionnaire data would be used to triangulate the secondary data and the quantitative tool, to understand the reasons for the results identified, and to consider any identified or perceived external factors that may have affected them.

The literature search (in particular, the most comparable academic studies, as described in this Chapter) reinforced the appropriateness of these approaches.

## **CHAPTER 5 – PILOT STUDY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The pilot study was designed to test and (where necessary) prompt modifications of the planned methodology. It is described in some detail, to show how it enabled the planned methodology to develop to meet practical challenges.

The decision was taken to conduct the pilot study in two stages.

The first stage would

- provide background information on various aspects of the research, particularly to test the initial list of levers and some of the draft instrumentation
- provide the researcher with practical experience of research interviewing. Corbin & Strauss (2008) draw attention to the need for training and practice in interviews to obtain effective results.

The second stage would apply the lessons learned from the first stage, by testing in one Division the methodology and research instruments proposed for the main study.

### **5.2 First stage of the pilot study**

One Divisional Commander had already expressed his willingness to assist, so the first stage of the pilot study took place in his Divisional Headquarters, involving him and his key direct reports. This Division is referred to subsequently in this thesis as Division 1. Before detailed planning began, however, an opportunity arose to obtain input from two senior Salvation Army officers in the Research and Development Unit of Territorial Headquarters in London, and a joint interview was held, to enhance preparation for the Divisional interviews.



The original conception was that the first stage, whilst excluding questionnaires for corps/centre leaders and local participants, would otherwise test both interviews and questionnaires; but it became apparent that asking the same respondent for both an interview and a questionnaire response might inhibit willingness to participate. It was therefore decided to focus only on interviews for this stage; and this principle was carried forward into the main study. Divisional Commanders were, however, asked to undertake both, as well as to complete a mission success matrix.

Six officials in the Divisional Headquarters were invited to participate, of whom four agreed. This was seen as sufficient for this stage, particularly when added to the two Territorial Headquarters officials previously interviewed.

Interviews lasted about one hour each, were recorded with the respondents' prior agreement, and were subsequently transcribed by the researcher. No specific notes were taken, reflecting the researcher's desire to focus, and be seen to focus, entirely on the respondent and to maximise interactive opportunities. The Territorial Headquarters interview was only lightly structured; the framework used for the Divisional Headquarters interviews is set out in Appendix E.

Much was learned from the first stage of the pilot study; key points are summarized in Appendix F.

Two particularly significant issues emerged. The first was how to obtain participation, initially by Divisional Commanders, but then at other levels. The choice between subject Divisions depended on individual Divisional Commanders' willingness to participate, not on the researcher's reasoned preferences to maximize representativeness. Thus a non-random sample was inevitable.

For individuals, satisfying themselves that the research was a valid use of their scarce time was key. An additional barrier would be any suspicion that business methods were being brought into an area where they might be considered inappropriate. Another key

aspect of communication involved persuading participants of the potential value of the research to the Territory, to their Division, to their function, or to a combination of them. Benefits to the individual were unlikely to be persuasive, although for any leader an hour spent considering such issues might itself help individual thinking. Assurance of top executive support was particularly important in this hierarchical organization, as was the ability to find supportive Divisional Commanders. Peer encouragement might also be important. All communications needed to stress that this was not an exercise by top management to “check up” on lower levels in the hierarchy or to impose an irrelevant business concept, but rather was an attempt to help enable leaders to succeed in their mission objectives.

The second significant issue was the balance amongst the levers. The original draft research field addressed the impact of strategic planning on mission outcomes in conurbations. This was then amended to recognise also the impact of other interacting factors. However, early consideration confirmed fears that it would be difficult to segregate these factors from each other, and in particular to measure their individual impacts. Consequently, the question arose whether it might be more useful to focus the research onto strategic planning, treating other factors as impacting upon it, rather than to continue to treat strategic planning as just one of ten (subsequently eleven) identified and theoretically equally-treated variables. However, the researcher decided that the interaction between the levers was such that all should continue to be considered. Emphasis would also be needed on strategically-relevant sub-topics, such as mission and co-ordination.

The first stage had suggested that there was already considerable change in progress within the Territory in respect of the identified levers; that implementation was creating some issues; and that distinctive issues applied to the Territory in relation to some of the levers, because of its culture, religious stance, and mission. All these factors were subsequently confirmed in the second stage of the pilot study and in the main study.

Thus despite the inevitable challenges that were identified, the first stage of the pilot study confirmed the research to be of potential value, and capable of being completed if the identified challenges could be met, and obstacles overcome. It also provided a valuable set of insights into how the second stage might be set up and conducted.

### **5.3 Second stage of the pilot study - design and sample choice**

The second stage of the pilot study, in accordance with normal research expectations, was seen as critical to test the methodology. For the current research, an important additional objective existed, to build on the first stage to help gain credibility amongst Divisional Commanders, as the researcher's initial assumption (reinforced by conversations with Territory officials) was that there might be an inherent reluctance to participate.

Greater content was needed for the second stage of the pilot study. In addition to interviewing Divisional leaders, this sought questionnaire surveys of leaders, and of some lay members of corps and staff of centres. It also required collecting a limited amount of secondary data on local membership numbers.

In Escott's examination of church growth principles in the Salvation Army (1996), a questionnaire was sent directly to corps; although he had executive-level sponsorship, no intermediate levels were involved. For the current research, however, it was essential that Divisional Commanders should be willing to participate personally. One reason was so that his or her views could be compared with those at corps and centre level. But informal comments made to the researcher from various sources also suggested resistance from Salvation Army officers to requests for statistics and information, partly due to perceived increased work pressures; additionally, some of the questionnaire content could be seen as sensitive. So the researcher concluded that positive encouragement (within ethical research principles) from the Divisional Commander to potential participants would be essential for an acceptable response rate.

Accordingly, the choice of the Divisional Commander for the second stage of the pilot study was primarily based on whether cooperation and commitment were likely, accepting that a degree of the same non-random sampling might also be encountered when proceeding to the main study. A recommendation from the Territory sponsors was therefore accepted as the prime factor for selecting potential Divisional Commander respondents at this stage.

After one false start, another Divisional Commander was approached, and agreed to participate. Thus the choice of Division (referred to in the remainder of this thesis as Division 2) for the second stage of the pilot study was again pragmatic, accepting the disadvantages of being unable to apply scientific principles of sample selection.

A key decision was still needed on what part or parts of the Division should comprise the sample. It was not practicable to include the whole Division, partly because this would place excessive demands on the Divisional Commander in requiring ratings on individual corps and centres, but also because the scale would be excessive for the pilot study, and would constitute an undue proportion of the total field research data.

Following a simple postcode analysis, a geographical section of the Division was selected, consisting of 9 corps and 4 social centres.

## **5.4 Second stage of the pilot study – methodological elements**

### ***5.4.1 Divisional Commander semi-structured interview***

A duration of up to one and a half hours was requested. The interview was recorded, and a transcript was subsequently supplied, which the respondent was free to amend. The interview sought views on critical success factors, mission and related factors, measurement, and each of the influential levers. The researcher recognized the danger that listing individual levers for discussion might lead to “Yes, that’s important too” responses, but decided that a less structured approach would not cover the ground

sufficiently in the available time. A specimen of the interview framework used both for Divisional Commanders and Divisional Directors appears as Appendix E.

#### ***5.4.2 Divisional Commander questionnaire***

Design aspects were similar to those explained for the leaders' questionnaire in subsection 5.4.5, and the questionnaire included broadly similar questions to those in the leaders' questionnaire, adjusted where appropriate to reflect a Divisional Commander's focus. A specimen appears as Appendix B.

At 16 pages, the questionnaire was shorter than that for leaders, recognizing the additional demands being made on the Divisional Commander; as some specifically relevant questions were added, not all questions in the leaders' questionnaire could be replicated.

#### ***5.4.3 Divisional Commander mission success matrix***

This instrument replaced the original concept of asking the Divisional Commander to complete a separate questionnaire in respect of each participating corps and centre. As well as being less time-consuming, this format allowed the respondent readily to compare ratings between corps and centres; the researcher considered that this might improve the quality and comparability of ratings.

The matrix was a spreadsheet on which each corps and centre was assessed on a 1 – 7 scale in respect of success against past, present and forecast mission success factors, with the variables corresponding with questions in the leaders' questionnaire, to allow Divisional Commander/leader comparisons. To protect the confidentiality of leader respondents, the matrix supplied to the Divisional Commander for completion included all corps and centres which had been invited to be part of the sample, so that it would not reveal which units, and thus which leaders, had responded. A pro forma matrix appears as Appendix R.

#### **5.4.4 *Divisional Director interviews***

A semi-structured interview was requested with each Divisional Director, lasting up to one hour, recorded and transcribed as for the Divisional Commander. The content was similar to that for the Divisional Commander, but might include focus on each respondent's functional responsibilities. Divisional Directors were initially briefed through an e-mail from the Divisional Commander, followed by an additional e-mail by the researcher, with a follow-up to non-respondents.

#### **5.4.5 *Leaders' questionnaires***

A detailed questionnaire was sent to each corps commanding officer, non-officer in charge of a corps, or centre manager (this is referred to throughout this thesis as the "leaders' questionnaire"). These questionnaires consisted of 21 pages (including a front-sheet and a sheet of instructions and guidance), combining background details of the respondent, their views on the progress and potential of the corps or centre and of the conurbation, and their assessment of the effectiveness of various factors relevant to the influential levers. A specimen appears as Appendix C.

The danger of questionnaire fatigue was recognised, This questionnaire – the longest in this research – was comparable with that used by Escott (1996), but was still of a length that some contacts suggested might be prohibitive, partly because of workloads, but also because of an existing push-back against requests for information. Consequently, the content was less than the researcher would have ideally wished; but since the response rate proved satisfactory, the right balance was probably struck.

It was decided not to have separate questionnaires for corps and centres, given the degree of common ground, but certain questions were specific to corps or to centres. Similarly some questions depended on whether the respondent was an officer, a non-officer in charge of a corps, or a non-officer centre manager.

The content of this questionnaire, like the others, was designed by the researcher

- to maximize the useful data, without damaging the response rate
- to triangulate data likely to be obtained from
  - o the interviews
  - o other questionnaires
- to encourage participants, by simple scales, to assess attributes that they might otherwise hesitate to quantify
- to stimulate freeform comments where possible.

The structure and wording of the questionnaires were deliberately not based directly on the individual levers, though a strong correlation still existed; the researcher believed that respondents would more readily relate to a thematical arrangement.

Some of the questions might be felt personally challenging, or intrusive; and comments on the performance of the Territory itself, or its component parts, particularly when expressed to an “outsider”, were somewhat counter-cultural. However, it was thought better to attempt to obtain data that would address the research aims adequately, rather than compromise at this stage. The possibility that such searching questions might discourage respondents from submitting the questionnaires at all had to be accepted; but to mitigate this danger guidance notes indicated that, although fuller responses would be more helpful, the researcher would prefer individual questions to be ignored rather than the questionnaire not to be submitted.

Escott provided a useful comparator for this questionnaire. His audience was broadly similar and he obtained a response rate of 42 % in the form of 63 responses. He had the possible advantage of being a serving Salvation Army officer, which might have encouraged responses. The current study, on the other hand, had the potential advantage of an independent researcher, and the expressed support and encouragement of the relevant Divisional Commander. Nevertheless, one Territory officer (recalling Escott’s study, but not involved directly in the current one) told the researcher

informally that the workload on officers was now higher, and was likely to impact adversely on the response rate. This view was confirmed by other informal conversations with officers, the general view being that getting responses would be problematic.

The questionnaire was tested prior to the pilot study by an experienced officer not directly involved in the study. Minor changes were made to reflect his comments. The researcher responded to advice from various sources that using e-mail and an electronically distributed questionnaire would probably facilitate responses. The final version of the questionnaire was then translated by the researcher into electronic form, and sent to and back from the researcher's son, to test that it could be technically opened, annotated, and returned.

The leaders' questionnaire was supplemented by

- (a) an initial invitation to take part from the Divisional Commander
- (b) the researcher's e-mail accompanying the questionnaire
- (c) a personalized thank-you e-mail for completed questionnaires
- (d) a follow-up e-mail for non-responses

#### **5.4.6 *Local questionnaires***

An 8 page questionnaire was offered to corps volunteers or centre employees (referred to throughout this thesis as the "local questionnaire") to seek grass roots views on the key issues of success and influential levers. A specimen appears as Appendix D.

There was no practicable means of direct contact with potential respondents, so leaders were invited to select up to ten individuals who they felt could best comment on the issues raised by the questionnaires. The inability to use random sampling was again accepted as inevitable. Some potential respondents might not use e-mail, so hard copies and stamped return envelopes (addressed to the researcher) were sent to those leaders



who agreed to cooperate, asking them to carry out the distribution. Consequently, it was not practicable to send follow-up reminders to potential respondents.

The local questionnaires were not separately tested, as the individual who had undertaken this task failed to do so, and it was felt that further delay would prejudice potential cooperation from leaders. It was not felt, however, that a lack of testing would prove significant, as much of the local questionnaire was a shorter subset of the leaders' questionnaire, which had already been tested for usability, and had proved satisfactory in practice.

#### ***5.4.7 All questionnaires***

Minor elements of the questionnaires – principally the demographic categories for respondents – reflect Escott's (1996), which itself was modified in part from Beasley-Murray and Wilkinson (1981). The overwhelming bulk of the current questions were, however, specific to this study.

### **5.5 Second stage of the pilot study - practical application of the research methodology**

#### ***5.5.1 Interviews***

The interview element was successful. The frankness and content of the interviews were positive, although the number of interviews achieved was disappointing. The interview with the Divisional Commander was essential, but in addition to this the researcher was only able to interview 2 of the 5 Divisional Directors, giving a 50% overall response. This was not unexpected, however, as the first stage of the pilot study had achieved only 4 interviews out of 6, or 67%.

### ***5.5.2 Leaders' questionnaires***

Six responses were received. Although the questionnaire sample included only 13 corps and centres, 20 questionnaires were issued, because in cases where two full-time individuals share leadership of a corps it was important to write to both and invite each to participate. Thus a realistic analysis calculates the response as 6 out of 13, or 46%, which more validly compares with the 42% response for Escott (1996).

The leaders' questionnaire included 164 data points and 14 options for free-form information or comment, though not all of these applied to all respondents.

Unsurprisingly, respondents did not answer all questions applicable to them, but of the questions requiring a numeric judgmental rating, the number of ratings given ranged from 70 to 102, with a mean of 91. The full range of the 7-point rating scale was used, the mean rating being 4.59.

### ***5.5.3 Local questionnaires***

Despite reminders, only one leader respondent replied to the request to facilitate local questionnaires, and only two completed local questionnaires were received. The researcher had concerns, therefore, whether this instrument would prove viable in the main study, given the apparent reluctance of leaders to involve their team members, and the fact that some units would be small and might have difficulty in identifying suitable respondents.

### ***5.5.4 Divisional Commander questionnaires***

This questionnaire was duly completed, but as explained in subsection 6.4.3 no separate analysis of Divisional Commander questionnaires appears in this thesis.

### ***5.5.5 Statistics***

Although little secondary data was sought, one of the four corps respondents failed to supply them, emphasizing the desirability of obtaining such statistics from Territorial Headquarters instead, with the incidental benefit of making the leaders' questionnaire slightly less onerous.

### ***5.5.6 Overall assessment of application of the methodology***

A key finding of the methodology was confirmation of the expected difficulties in securing individual participation, despite positive support from the Divisional Commander.

These limited results suggested that, even with strong executive support, executing this type of research via an interview and questionnaire methodology within the Territory would continue to be challenging. On the other hand, it also suggested that if a sufficient degree of success could be achieved it would represent a distinctive contribution,

The overall conclusion was that the research project remained justified, valuable and viable, but that the methodology would need modest review for the main study. The potential loss of the local questionnaires meant that the desired methodology of triangulating the leaders' views of mission success by using qualitative judgments from above and below in the hierarchy would be impacted, although importantly the Divisional Commander's questionnaire and matrix would still allow the (probably more important) ability to use the Divisional Commander's views to triangulate those of leaders. A further form of triangulation potentially available was represented by the secondary quantitative data – membership numbers and attendances.

No separate numeric analysis of the local questionnaires was attempted, given that only 2 responses were obtained. However, the data was combined with that for the main study, and is described in Chapters 6, 7 and 9.

## **5.6 Conclusions from the second stage of the pilot study**

There appeared to be a belief in the Territory that, despite its strengths and updated administration in recent years, its administrative processes and particularly its strategic planning had significant scope for improvement. A proviso must be the very small size and unrepresentative nature of the initial samples.

Significant effort has been invested in recent years in improving administrative processes, including career planning, performance management, and communication; but the results appear to be viewed by the levels currently surveyed as mixed. There was accordingly reason to believe that examining influential levers could prove revealing and beneficial to the organization; it might also be indicative for similar issues in comparable organizations.

A general concern of information fatigue appeared to exist – with disapproval of the time involved in responding to requests from elsewhere in the organization, even where of a straightforward nature, requiring little specific research. This created two particular problems

- currently available quantitative information is in general limited in scope and reliability. The exception is data required for legal or funding purposes, such as social services; but, ironically, this better-quality data is largely peripheral to the current research project.
- there is a reluctance to give time to research, and in particular to supply data that is not readily available. This may be implicitly supported by the residue of a long-established cultural reluctance to reveal what might be regarded as internal secrets, or by hierarchical concerns.

A major outstanding task of the pilot study was to complete the strategy for data analysis, beyond the initial relatively simple statements and comparisons. Whilst theoretically this should precede the design methodology and collection of data for the main study, the need to maintain the impetus of the research suggested that such issues, whilst being pursued as soon as possible, should not be allowed to hold up the data collection process.

### **5.7 Implications for the research proposal and research question**

The pilot study broadly followed the methodological approach forecast in the research proposal, although available documentary material was more limited than anticipated.

The biggest challenge in responding to the research proposal was the expressed intention to include examination of the “interaction with external factors” by influential levers. Controlling for external influences such as differing demographics, the quality of local resources and similar factors was addressed only at a relatively superficial level (for example, asking for simple assessments by leaders and the Divisional Commander), and it was difficult to see how this could be carried to a deeper level within practical possibilities.

### **5.8 Conclusion**

Valuable lessons were learned from both stages of the pilot study, and building on the literature it was believed that relatively minor amendments (described in detail in Chapter 6) to the research methods and research instruments would result in a methodology capable of being applied to the main study. How this worked in practice will be examined in Chapter 6.

## **CHAPTER 6 – MAIN STUDY, AND ITS CONSOLIDATION WITH PILOT STUDY DATA**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This Chapter describes the application of the methodology to the main study of the research programme, the actual experience in administering the main study, and the consolidated data gathering from the pilot and main studies.

### **6.2 Changes to the original design**

The research proposal contemplated a potential total sample of six Divisions – one for the pilot study and five for the main study – from the 18 in the Territory, although the Division covering Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland was excluded from the research, for logistical and sampling reasons. Such a sample remained the aim when the main study began, but as explained in Section 6.3 it proved unobtainable, which emphasized the dangers of the sample bias already identified. So the potential impact on the generalizability of the findings had to be accepted.

The basic methodological design remained largely unchanged from the second stage of the pilot study, the essential components being:

#### ***6.2.1 Questionnaire for each Divisional Commander***

The questionnaire used in the pilot study had proved fit-for-purpose, but minor changes were appropriate:

- The guidance notes were slightly amended to reflect the probability of electronic responses
- Separate subsections were provided to allow comments on each of the two groupings (corps and/or centres in a broad geographical part of the Division), expected to be involved (only one grouping had existed in the

pilot study). A new subsection on accountability was introduced (this had arisen as a significant point in interviews)

- The list of packaged programmes (formerly called “concept products”) was updated
- A separate sub-section was created for recording the time taken to complete the questionnaire, to increase the likelihood that this statistic would be supplied.

### ***6.2.2 Semi-structured interview with Divisional Commander***

This was retained, though accepting that 60 minutes (with a maximum of 75) rather than the original 90 was the most that could realistically be sought.

The purpose and framework remained unchanged, but the interview structure (common with that for Divisional Directors) was updated in the light of pilot study experience. In particular:

- Respondents were asked about critical success factors, rather than a more general reference to positive steps to facilitate mission results
- To provoke prioritization and discrimination, respondents were invited to suggest two or three of the influential levers which are:
  - o the most important for success
  - o the best executed
  - o the worst executed.
- The inability to provide feedback to respondents was included in the preliminaries, rather than addressed in the final moments.

The interview structure protocol for the main study appears as Appendix J.

### ***6.2.3 Mission success matrix.***

This was unchanged from the second stage of the pilot study, described in Chapter 5.

#### ***6.2.4 Semi-structured interview with each Divisional Director***

The same schedule was used as for Divisional Commander interviews, updated as explained in subsection 6.2.2 above.

#### ***6.2.5 Leaders' questionnaire***

This questionnaire response rate in the pilot study had been almost at the planned level, so the researcher was unwilling to reduce the breadth of data sought. The questionnaire's length was largely determined by the existence of eleven discrete influential levers (increased from the original ten by the inclusion of prayer), plus the importance of other issues such as mission success and the impact of local circumstances.

The vast bulk of the questionnaire was retained from the pilot study, but some changes were made, in addition to those for the Divisional Commander's questionnaire:

- A new section sought broad classification of the local approach to worship style, the diversity of which had become increasingly apparent
- Respondents were asked to classify the degree of relationship (if any) with other corps and centres
- In seeking classification of any plans, the concept of a formal mission development plan was added as an option
- Where a local plan existed, respondents were asked to clarify the degree of organizational influence on its creation
- The word "conurbation" was replaced by "your part of the Division", recognizing the practical and definitional difficulty of the former word
- A new section was added on mission, vision and values statements
- The section seeking specific local statistics was omitted, as experience in the pilot study suggested it would be better to obtain these directly from



Territorial Headquarters. This also helped limit the increase in the questionnaire's length

#### ***6.2.6 Local questionnaire***

The response rate to this questionnaire had been disappointing in the pilot study. Nevertheless, the researcher was reluctant to give up prematurely this potentially useful source of data, reflecting grass roots views at corps or centre level. Additionally, such a questionnaire potentially allowed some triangulation of the views of leaders. It was therefore decided to retain the questionnaire in the main study.

The researcher saw its positioning as a dilemma. The e-mails to leaders in the pilot study may, in mentioning administering such a local questionnaire as part of what they were being asked to do, have inadvertently discouraged some from participating at all. On the other hand, weakening the request could encourage some leaders to opt out who might otherwise have complied. On balance, it was decided to make clear in the initial e-mail that cooperation was hoped for, but that completing the leaders' questionnaire would not commit them to this additional step if they considered it unfeasible or inappropriate in their particular circumstances.

Minor amendments were necessary to the local questionnaire from the pilot study version:

- To reduce barriers to recruitment, respondents were not asked to volunteer contact details for any further researcher enquiries; the researcher felt that this was unlikely to impact significantly on useful data
- The short list of packaged programmes was brought into line with that used for the leaders' questionnaire
- The guidance notes were simplified, and reassurance given that responses would not be used to judge individuals (there might otherwise have been a fear that the views expressed could impact on the leader).

### **6.2.7 Other documents**

The researcher drafted a number of basic analysis documents to summarize the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the main study (including incorporation of those from the pilot study). These are described in Chapter 7.

### **6.3 Issues in turning the proposed sample into reality**

This was a difficult, prolonged, somewhat frustrating and inevitably iterative process.

The intention had been that the main study would repeat the methodology of the pilot study, extending it to a further four more Divisions. At the outset of the main study it was clear that limited changes would be needed to reflect learning from the pilot study; additionally it was expected that two groupings of corps and centres would be surveyed in each main study Division, rather than the one larger grouping in the pilot study. Overall, however no radical change was deemed necessary.

The key practical problem in attempting to achieve the planned sample proved to be a reluctance of Divisional Commanders to commit themselves and their teams to involvement. This was expected, and may be partially explained by Pallant's (2007) comment (p.30):

“There is a tendency among many Salvation Army officers not to be critical, or even particularly open, about their experience of ministry to outsiders. I am younger and more junior – in terms of age and Salvation Army rank – to all the participants but I have insight into the responsibilities and practices of DCs in other parts of the world. Therefore my insider status is likely to have enabled participants to speak more openly and helped me hear more of what was being implied.”

In a footnote (footnote 31, p.31) Pallant adds:

“The military culture has affected TSA [The Salvation Army] practice and therefore concepts such as ‘loyalty’ and ‘seniority’ are still prized by some. An insider researcher is able to sidestep some of these barriers.”

Recognizing this issue, the researcher (who already knew of Pallant’s views through informal discussion) emphasized those aspects of his own position which might partially compensate for his not being an officer insider – his independence, his business and nonprofit experience, his partial insider status and knowledge as an adherent with Salvation Army experience, and his managerial and academic record to date. As did Pallant, he also made use of senior contact introductions where relevant.

The researcher’s strategy was:

- To accept the guidance of officials in Territorial Headquarters to identify individual Divisional Commanders who were most likely to be sympathetic
- To build on this through a “warm lead”, with the Divisional Commander being contacted initially by a Territorial Headquarters official
- To follow up the lead by sending an explanatory e-mail, suggesting a meeting without commitment in the Divisional Commander’s office
- If the Divisional Commander agreed, to visit the office and offer a presentation, explaining the nature and rationale for the research, the process, the timescales, and what would be sought from the Divisional Commander and his or her team;
- Either to receive a response on the spot, or more frequently to await a decision after the Divisional Commander had sought time to consider.

The researcher also invited Divisional Commanders to consult either or both of their peers who had participated in the two stages of the pilot study; it was hoped that this might reassure potential respondents. It is not known how many, if any, took up this offer.

The researcher was concerned, however, that any such positive peer influence might be outweighed by increasing intelligence that other peers were declining participation, and felt that a point of decreasing return could quickly be reached in such approaches.

Of the 18 Divisions in the Territory, one (Ireland) had been ruled out of scope, and two others had been used for the pilot study, which would severely restrict the benefits obtainable by further study. Ten others were invited to receive a visit from the researcher; five accepted visits, of which only two agreed to participate.

The reasons for the low response rate – either declining a visit, or subsequently deciding against participation– varied, the strongest themes being other commitments or the timing of the research. Recency of appointment was an understandable concern, and changes of appointment were also an issue. However, Divisional Commanders have heavy pastoral as well as managerial commitments, and the nature of the methodology placed significant demands on their time, as well as requiring them to make challenging judgments on mission success of units for which they and their teams were responsible. It is also clear that concern for the time of members of their team – either in Divisional Headquarters, or at corps or centre level – was also a factor in non-participation.

The options remained of:

- Trying the remaining Divisional Commanders
- Seeking deeper penetration into those Divisions already participating
- Revisiting Divisions used for the pilot study
- Re-orientating the methodology, emphasizing Territorial Headquarters, where interviews might be easier to arrange.

Given elapsing time and the dangers of slipping the timescales, the researcher decided against pursuing such possibilities until the extent and quality of data available from the two Divisions already enrolled could be assessed.

The two Divisions participating in the main study are referred to as Divisions 3 and 4 in the remainder of this thesis.

#### **6.4 Subsequent experience in administering the main study**

This Section and Section 6.5 record the degree to which it subsequently proved possible to implement the planned approach to the main study, and the response levels and rates obtained. They do not include analysis of the data, the results of the analysis, or its discussion, which appear in Chapters 7, 9 and 10.

##### ***6.4.1 Rationale for consolidated data gathering***

Although – as explained above – the questionnaires and interview protocols used for the main study incorporated changes from those used in the pilot study, these were modest, and most of the material was common. Consequently, the combined data base from the four Divisions represented in the pilot and main studies comprised the source for the data analysis, although only 3 of the 4 were involved in the questionnaire surveys and the Divisional Commander documentation. The combined results of the various research instruments and methods are now examined.

##### ***6.4.2 Divisional Commander interviews***

Interviews took place with both Divisional Commanders in the main study. Consequently, across the pilot and main studies four such interviews were completed, transcribed, and in respect of the later three of them an opportunity was given to the respondents to make amendments, although only one did so (the process of offering the transcript for review had not been adopted at the outset of the pilot study). For reasons of confidentiality, their comments are combined with those of Divisional Directors.

#### ***6.4.3 Divisional Commander questionnaires***

Both Divisional Commanders in the main study completed Divisional Commander questionnaires. Whilst the data that they contained – including freeform text comments – has been taken into account within the research, the risk to confidentiality consequent on this small number has precluded a separate section in this thesis analyzing their results.

#### ***6.4.4 Divisional Commander Mission Success Matrices***

Only one Divisional Commander of the two in the main study returned a completed mission success matrix. Thus across the pilot and main studies two Divisional Commanders in total completed mission success matrices in respect of those corps and centres within the sample for their Division. This gave the researcher some opportunity to test Divisional Commanders' views of mission success in individual corps or centres against those of the leaders responsible for those units (Section 7.13). Unfortunately, the small number of responses meant that, again, protecting confidentiality limited the detail with which such comparisons can be recorded.

#### ***6.4.5 Divisional Director interviews***

Across the two Divisions, 9 Divisional Directors were invited to participate in the main study, 6 of whom did so. Thus a total of 11 interviews with Divisional Directors took place in the pilot and main studies, which with the four Divisional Commander interviews, and two senior Territorial Headquarters officials in the first part of the pilot study gave a total of 17 interview respondents.

#### ***6.4.6 Leaders' questionnaires***

Across the two Divisions, 47 leaders from 32 units were invited to participate in the main study, of which 17 did so (a 36% response rate).

Thus a total of 23 leaders of 67 invited from 45 units completed questionnaires across the pilot and main studies (a response rate of 34%). However, some corps had a husband and wife team, and in two corps both participated. Allowing for this, 21 units included at least one respondent (a more satisfactory 47% response rate). As indicated in Table 6.1 below, this was the one part of the methodology when responses for the combined pilot and main studies exceeded the predictions in the research proposal.

Only 3 of the 23 respondents were centre managers (from 8 centres invited across the pilot and main studies). Thus 38% of centres responded, though the sample of centres was so small that this is not significant.

#### ***6.4.7 Local questionnaires***

Responses in the main study proved better than in the pilot study; 17 responding leaders in the main study were invited to involve local individuals, of whom 4 agreed to do so, eventually leading to 11 local questionnaires being returned. Some explanatory correspondence was received from leaders who felt that participation by members of their team was not achievable. This brought the total across both studies to 13. The responses – 2 from centres and 11 from corps – provide interesting, albeit not statistically reliable, insights.

### **6.5 Consolidated data gathering results from the pilot and main studies**

At the outset of the research it was difficult to assess even what samples would be possible, let alone to anticipate response rates. Previous Salvation Army-based doctoral studies offered little guidance, although Escott (1996) obtained a 41.7% response rate when sending a questionnaire of broadly-similar length to 151 corps in the Territory.

Research instrument	Proposed invitations	Assumed response %	Assumed responses	Actual responses	Notes
INTERVIEWS					
Territorial HQ	5	100	5	1	1.
Div Commdr	6	100	6	4	
Div Director	24	80	19	11	
Other	6	100	6	0	2.
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	41		<b>36</b>	<b>16</b>	
QUESTIONNAIRES					
Div Commdr	6	100	6	3	3.
Div Director	24	80	19	0	4.
Leader	40	50	20	23	
Local	200	30	60	13	5.
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	270		<b>105</b>	<b>39</b>	
MISS SUCC MTRX	0		0	2	3.
<b>TOTAL</b>	311		<b>141</b>	<b>57</b>	

**Table 6.1 Participation levels projected in research proposal and found in practice**

NOTES:

1. Mainly excluded from scope to avoid delay, but one interview with 2 respondents took place
2. Follow-up interviews to questionnaires proved unnecessary and impractical
3. Originally-planned additional subsidiary questionnaires for Divisional Commander were replaced by mission success matrices (an additional research instrument, designed and implemented during the pilot study)
4. As Divisional Directors were unlikely to be willing to complete a questionnaire as well as an interview, only the latter was sought



5. With 5 exceptions, leaders who themselves participated nevertheless apparently felt unable to ask team members to do so; various reasons were given.

Table 6.1 shows the original projections for invitations, the assumed response rate, the assumed responses and the actual responses obtained across pilot and main studies, together with brief comment on the variations.

The researcher had overt support and cooperation from Territorial Headquarters; warm leads to Divisional Commanders were obtained; and those Divisional Commanders who participated openly endorsed the research to their teams, confirmed their own participation, and expressed the hope that their teams would consider participation. So these statistics suggest not only that the original projections were optimistic, but that participation within the Territory in such a project was not, and is unlikely to be, easily procured.

Care was taken to ensure the comparability of pilot and main study data, though some variables were unique to each.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

The processes described so far provided a volume and variety of data that was believed to be as much as could be reasonably obtained, and sufficient to give indicative answers to the research questions in Chapter 1.

Chapter 7 follows, and indicates how the themes that emerged from the data were identified.

## **CHAPTER 7 – DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Sections 7.2 to 7.6 of this Chapter examine the research instruments, and secondary statistical data. In the following Sections the individual datasets are synthesised into results. These are considered in Chapter 8 in relation to the literature and to research theory, and their implications are discussed in Chapter 9.

### **7.2 Leaders' questionnaires data**

#### ***7.2.1 Rating scales and rankings***

Both rating scales and rankings were used in the leaders' questionnaire.

Rating scales of 1 (low) to 7 (high) were used for most parts of the questionnaire.

The relative geographical and organizational distance of Territorial Headquarters means that leaders have closer and more regular contact with Divisional Headquarters. This may be a factor in assessing variations in ratings by local units, particularly in the context of intransitivity of connectedness, discussed in Section 3.7.

In respect of components of intrinsic and extrinsic reward, however, rankings were used instead of ratings, as it was felt that this was better likely to distinguish preferences. Respondents were asked to rank six components in order of preference.

#### ***7.2.2 Data obtained***

As anticipated, the leaders' questionnaire proved to be one of the most useful instruments in the research. In total, 23 were completed across the pilot and main

studies combined, against 20 originally postulated. The number of questions answered varied, reflecting:

- the willingness of respondents to answer particular questions
- the differences in the number of questions applicable to different respondents – for example, fewer questions for employed managers than for officers, fewer still for non-officers in charge of a corps
- the logic of the question structure (for example, corps without a plan would not answer questions on the plan's creation)
- differences in the question sets used for the pilot and main studies.

In view of this variation in the number of questions answered – and thus in the number of variables rated by respondents – the analysis has included a calculation of the mean number of ratings given; this was 93.2, with a range of 70 – 102, and is of course different from the mean of actual ratings awarded, which is considered next.

**The mean overall rating was relatively high at 4.61, which should be considered when assessing the significance of variations from the overall mean.** Mean ratings from individual respondents ranged from 3.83 to 5.57.

### **7.3 Local questionnaires data**

#### ***7.3.1 Introduction***

The low response to local questionnaires is commented upon in Chapters 5 and 6. Combining the results from the pilot and main studies, 13 local questionnaires were returned, including two from centres.

The data were thus insufficient to provide any reliable picture, but this Section examines the key themes that emerge.

### ***7.3.2 Nature of responses***

Local questionnaires were completed by members of corps or employees of centres who were not themselves leaders of the unit.

The main study local questionnaire (reproduced as Appendix I) contained no information on respondents, and consisted of 41 data points, plus opportunities for explanatory or additional free-text comment. The mean rating was 4.75. Significant free-form comment appeared in some questionnaires; others had none.

## **7.4 Interviews data**

Sixteen interviews were conducted – four with Divisional Commanders, eleven with Divisional Directors, and one jointly with two senior members of the Territory's Research and Development Department. All were transcribed by the researcher, and all but the joint interview were semi-structured, using the proformas appearing as Appendices E and J.

## **7.5 Statistical data**

### ***7.5.1 Available data***

The Territory collects two types of statistical data on its corps – attendances and membership.

Attendances data (which applies to social centres as well as corps) were formerly collected at regular intervals, but instead now involve an annual Programme Diary, using a sample eight-week period early in each year. Membership data is compiled through an Annual Membership Survey, assembled around December each year, though the statistics thus collected for an individual corps usually show the position at a date

earlier in the year, thus tending to compensate for the theoretical time-lag between the two sets of data.

### ***7.5.2 Membership data***

The membership is the key people resource to support the corps commanding officer, whose key priorities will include:

- Increasing the number of soldiers, adherents, and junior soldiers
- Encouraging adherents to become soldiers
- Encouraging junior soldiers to become (senior) soldiers.

### ***7.5.3 Attendances data***

Attendances data cover a wide range of activities, including meetings (services), social activities (such as parent and toddler groups, creches or luncheon clubs), prayer meetings, recruits' classes, Bible classes, and outdoor ministry. Attendances are arguably of growing importance if there is an increasing social tendency for individuals to make informal associations with organizations rather than seek formal membership. Assuming this hypothesis to be true, then if other factors were controlled one might see attendances at least maintained even as formal membership declines.

Attendances data were obtained from existing Territorial Headquarters records. The validity of data depends on the quality of its local collection, and corps vary widely in their ability to cope with this. Some have a sophisticated management team; at the other extreme, there may be no commanding officer and few or no individuals whose spiritual gifts include collecting and recording statistics. Not all returns appear to have been made; in some cases centrally-held data is in arrears. It was not practicable to ask for such errors to be corrected for present purposes, so in such cases the researcher pragmatically sought the best fit of data.

A comprehensive study of attendance data was not practicable or meaningful within the scope of the research, given the wide variety of activities and the variations between corps. Instead, this part of the analysis focused on total activities.

## **7.6 Mission success matrices data**

The mission success matrix was designed by the researcher to enable a Divisional Commander to provide his or her own views on mission success in each corps or centre within the sample. A specimen mission success matrix form appears as Appendix R.

The intention was that each rating given by the Divisional Commander could be compared with that given by the leader of the same unit, as a guide to consistency in rating between different leadership levels, though accepting the limitations of this concept, including:

1. Either or both of the Divisional Commander or the leader might only have taken up their post within the 5-year period under review, so ratings would partially depend on assumptions or impressions about the situation before their arrival
2. If views diverged, it would not be evident which of the assessments was most realistic
3. The concept and measurement of mission success are inevitably unclear and difficult to define
4. Assessment is not only subjective but also subject to possible bias from either party.

If, as hoped, six Divisional Commanders had taken part in this aspect of the research, divisional degrees of correlation could have been included, without identifying divisions. In the event only two Divisional Commanders completed matrices.

Nevertheless, hypotheses tests were conducted using paired samples (the relevant leader's rating, and the Divisional Commander's, on each variable), though for reasons of confidentiality the identity of each division is further concealed. The analysis is set out in Section 7.13 below.

## **7.7 Approach to extracting and identifying results from the data**

### ***7.7.1 General principles***

In this subsection the data analysis described earlier in this Chapter is synthesized to establish the key features that emerge. After an updated review in Chapter 8 of the implications of the literature, these results are then discussed in Chapter 9.

To retain the benefits of triangulation as far as possible, and avoid premature assumptions, the researcher decided to examine the results of the questionnaires and the interviews separately, before combining and synthesizing the results of these examinations with the updated literature review to provide the conclusions of the research. In each case the aim was to find a practicable method of identifying and extracting key themes.

### ***7.7.2 Approach to results obtained from the questionnaires***

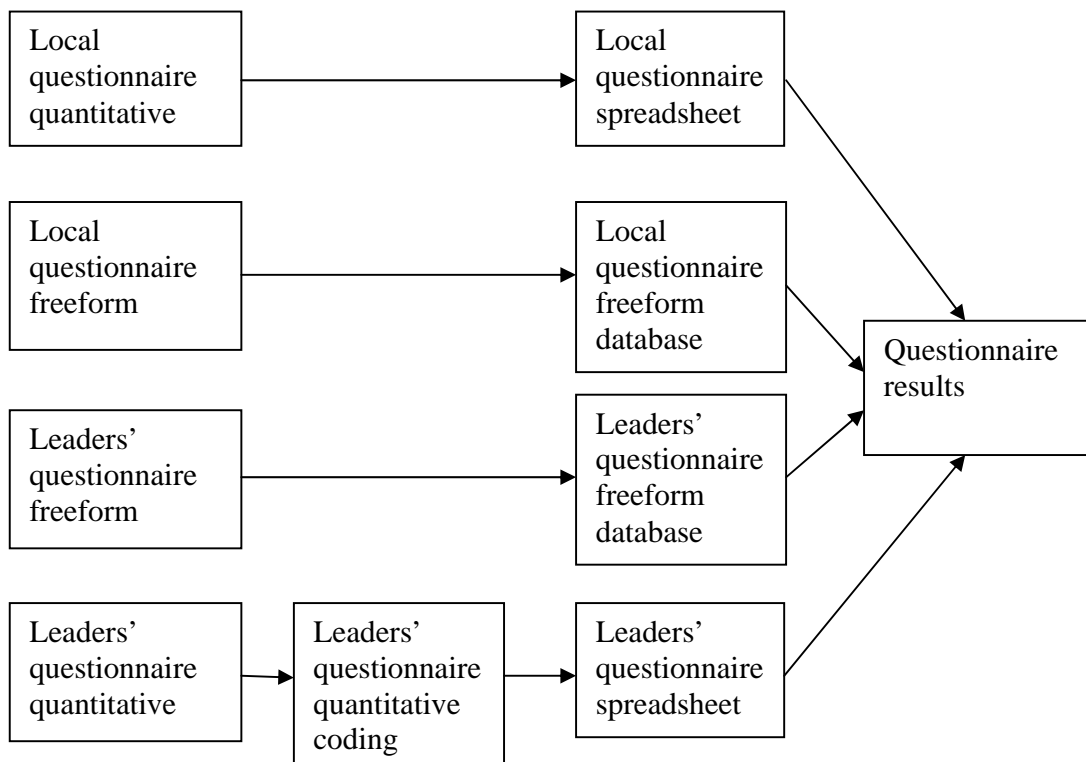
The analysis of data from the local and leaders' questionnaires followed a similar path, in parallel, with separate processes for quantitative and qualitative elements.

The quantitative variables were entered into spreadsheets, which were also used to assemble the demographic data, and to compile mean ratings for each question, as well as the mean rating and range of ratings used by each respondent, and overall statistics. For the Divisional Commanders' and leaders' questionnaires, a coding chart was used (which appears as Appendix K); this provided coding references for the non-numeric variables (other than free-form comments) within the questionnaire, enabling them to be inserted with the numeric data into the spreadsheet. In the case of local questionnaires the nature of the data meant that no coding chart was required.

For both types of questionnaire, separate databases were created for freeform comments, arranged by question and by respondent.

For the leaders' questionnaire special care was needed in designing, labelling and populating the spreadsheet and the freeform database, to recognize the different question numbering in the pilot and main studies. This resulted from changes to the leaders' questionnaire to reflect lessons learned in the pilot study, whilst generally ensuring consecutive numbering and lettering within each questionnaire, to avoid confusing respondents.

Figure 7.1 summarizes the process for analyzing data from questionnaires.



**Figure 7.1 Process for analyzing data from questionnaires**

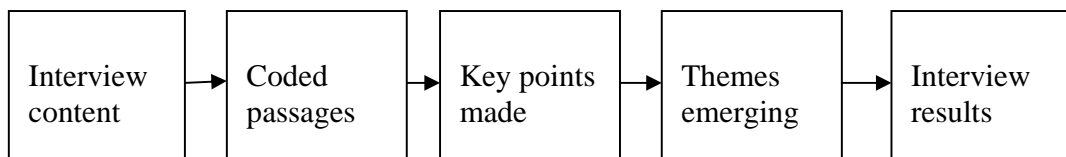


### ***7.7.3 Approach to data obtained from interviews***

After an initial analysis of interview content by coding, a summary of key points made by each respondent was analyzed under relevant headings, and a further summary prepared (Themes emerging from Data Display – Interviews) of those themes that appeared to be either significant to individual respondents, or widely held. This summary appears as Appendix L.

The interpretative weight placed upon these areas was necessarily largely subjective, but when the researcher drew general results from the evidence of the interviews, the formal analysis just described played the major part.

Figure 7.2 summarizes the process for analyzing data from interviews.



**Figure 7.2 Process for analyzing data from interviews**

### **7.8 Results obtained from the literature review**

The scope and content of the literature review were re-assessed in the light of the results from the pilot and main studies, and this reassessment and its implications are described in Chapter 8.

## **7.9 Results obtained from the leaders' questionnaires**

### ***7.9.1 Commitment of respondents and general views on the Salvation Army and its mission***

These topics were not specifically addressed in this questionnaire, but general positive comments were encountered, as well as specific comments for particular topics. With little evidence to the contrary despite the full opportunities to comment, this suggests a positive respondent view of the Salvation Army and the importance of its mission.

Comments included:

“Our mission at the moment is to get everyone we have already into a position where they are assured of their relationship with God, so that they would feel comfortable to lead somebody else to Christ. That is going to take some time but when God achieves it, we will have a good foundation to bring new people into. Then the sky is the limit!!!”

“God is at work - all over the division. Not just in a few places!”

“I enjoy my job. I could do it for another employer but as a Christian being involved with the Army is a pleasure.”

### ***7.9.2 Community served by the Corps or Centre***

A diverse range of demographic environment was reported. Six respondents classified their location as part of a large town ( $\geq 50,000$  inhabitants), nine as inner city, three as city fringe, one as city fringe/small town, two as suburban, one as small town ( $< 50,000$ ), and one as small town/rural. Sixteen classified their congregation as mainly local, the remaining seven as about half and half (local and non-local).

Explanatory comments showed a range of demographic situations, with strong cultural and ethnic diversity in many cases, and examples of deprived areas, but also some more traditional communities.

### ***7.9.3 Worship style***

This question appeared only in the main study, its desirability having become apparent from the pilot study.

Whilst the complexity of different worship situations means that categories are arbitrary, and an accurate classification is impossible, it seems clear that worship style has changed dramatically from the traditional model to a much more diverse approach. Only one respondent identified a traditional Salvation Army style, with one more reporting a combination of such a style and a “worship” approach; confusingly, this term is used as a contraction of “contemporary worship”, implying a relatively modern and informal style. One reported a traditional style, but limited by size and resources; one reported a modified Salvation Army style to reflect the culture of the local population; another combined this with a worship style; five reported a worship style; three reported that the traditional style had been modified in some other way to be distinctive to local needs; three reported a style distinctive to their needs, but significantly different from the traditional Salvation Army style. One placed itself in the residual category, but its narrative comment showed that it was moving from the traditional but limited category, towards combining this with a worship style.

Freeform comments strongly confirmed the diversity of congregations and worship style. One leader reported that only some 10% of the congregation had any Salvation Army background or affiliation. Importantly, the diversity was not only between corps; within some individual corps a variety of different styles was being integrated. One leader reported knowledge of a corps where (contrary to Salvation Army practice and belief) baptisms had taken place, though this was no longer so; this anecdote suggests the possibility that any excessive freedom to diversify could prove problematical for the

overall Salvation Army brand. One respondent felt that the Salvation Army found it easier to lead and manage a pattern of uniformity.

#### ***7.9.4 Relationship with other Salvation Army corps or centres***

The results suggested a generally low level of interrelationship between corps, and between corps and centres. Six units saw themselves as primarily standalone, seven reported themselves as tending to operate independently despite having at least one other unit within a reasonable distance; only four reported regular liaison with other units, though some others reported occasional liaison, or a move towards greater liaison.

This potential gap was emphasized when respondents were asked whether effective cooperation and consultation existed in their part of the division. Only 2 stated that it did; another 14 thought it to be partly effective, 5 thought it did not exist, and 2 thought it inapplicable because of their standalone status. When asked for numerical assessments (1 being very low, 7 being very high) the mean rating for importance was 4.91, but for the actual level was only 3.48, including 3 units rating it as 1 or 2. A slightly higher mean of 3.85 arose from assessing its results. Both latter numbers could be seen as disappointing, given the rating on importance; but there may be slight evidence of improvement, as (on a scale of 1 for much lower and 7 for much higher) comparisons of the position reported with previous experiences revealed a mean of 4.05 for its level, though almost the same for its results, at 3.84.

One respondent quoted past experience where a cooperation agreement had worked between corps, until replacement commanding officers worked differently, so that a stand-alone approach developed. Another respondent suggested that uniformity of approach facilitated cooperation, and that “unity in diversity” might be the most appropriate principle.

One significant factor in developing cooperation may be the existence and nature of local plans, and three questions in the leaders’ questionnaire addressed the existence and

nature of such plans. Two of these questions related to a plan for the corps or centre itself, and the responses suggested a preponderance of such planning. First, respondents were asked whether a specific plan existed for their own unit; ten reported a formal mission development plan, five others reported written plans (which may also have been mission development plans), four reported informal plans, and three reported no plan. Secondly, respondents in the main study were asked to indicate how any such plan was formed; six reported direct guidance from or consultation with Divisional or Territorial Headquarters, five reported having developed the plan locally, but reflecting divisional or territorial guidelines as well as local needs, the remaining three respondents suggesting that the plan was developed locally without significant higher-level input.

A more varied situation arose with the third question on planning, asking respondents to identify the nature of any plan that existed to coordinate activities in their part of the division. Seven reported written plans of this kind, one respondent reported an informal plan, and 14 reported an absence of a formal plan, but formal or (mostly) informal consultation instead. The limited level of local inter-unit planning is unsurprising, as in some cases opportunities for benefits from it may themselves be limited.

Whilst there was support for better coordination with other units, some considered that their demographic and geographic environment rendered such coordination impracticable.

#### ***7.9.5 Mission, vision and value statements***

During the currency of this research the Territory published mission, vision and value statements.

In 2009 the Territorial Commander (Matear (2009)) set out a “strategic mission priority” for the Territory – to “prioritise making disciples – growing saints”, as well as setting brief “objectives” within each of the three elements of the mission statement.

Additionally, the Secretary for Administrative Review (Parker (2009)) published a Statement of Core Values, built around integrity, accountability, boldness, passion, respect and compassion.

A section of the leaders' questionnaire for the main study asked in respect of each of mission, vision and values statements whether the unit had developed and used its own; or adopted the Territory's; or had not adopted the concept. The results are shown in Table 7.1, and demonstrate a strong interest in mission statements, with most units creating their own, but with units more-or-less equally divided on their commitment to vision and values statements, despite the recent Territorial launch.

Mission success in the current research was defined, and the questions about it framed, in the context of the Territory's three mission statement elements – saving souls, growing saints, and serving suffering humanity.

	Mission statement	Vision statement	Values statement
Own developed	13	8	6
Territory's adopted	1	1	3
Not adopted	3	7	8
Total responses	17	16	17

**Table 7.1 Mission, vision and value statements**

### ***7.9.6 Mission success in the individual corps or centre and its part of the Division***

Units were asked to assess their current mission success, both overall and in respect of each of the three components (on the scale of Very low 1 to Very high 7). They were also asked to assess how each of these variables compared with the same one 5 years go (on a scale of Much lower 1 to Much higher 7). The mean results are shown in Table 7.2. Whilst the mean pattern shown is not universal, it suggests two themes:

- There is more confidence in success in growing saints than in saving souls; and more still in serving suffering humanity; thus success is seen as higher in internal spiritual development and in providing local social services than in propagating religious belief to others externally
- 2010 mission success is rated slightly higher than that for 2005. (“Much the same” would prompt a rating of 4).

Respondents were also asked to evaluate the performance of their part of the Division in respect of overall mission success and the individual category of serving suffering humanity, rated respectively at 4.57 and 5.25. The other two variables were excluded from this part of the research as it was felt impracticable for leaders to assess the specific components of saving souls or growing saints in units other than their own, whereas they would be more aware of social services provided by other corps nearby.

	Criterion	Overall mission success	Saving souls	Growing saints	Serving suffering humanity
2010	Low/high	4.74	4.26	4.83	5.22
2010 cf 2005	Lower/higher	5.26	4.63	4.74	4.74

**Table 7.2 Current mission success, and change 2005-2010**

On a scale of Much lower 1 to Much higher 7, the change in overall mission success in respondents' part of the Division was rated at 5.18, and serving suffering humanity at 4.94.

Respondents were similarly asked to rate the impact of local circumstances and demographics on mission results, compared with five years earlier; this was seen as having increased somewhat, with mean ratings of 5.11 for their own unit, and 4.74 for their part of the Division.

Respondents were asked to assess the future potential for overall mission success of their own unit and of their part of the Division. On a scale of Very low 1 to Very high 7, respondents rated their own units at a mean of 6.09 and their part of the Division at 5.58.

Finally in this Section, respondents were asked to assess (on the scale of Very low 1 to Very high 7) how far statistical information and personal judgment were valid and useful in assessing mission success. The mean ratings were respectively 4.32 and 5.00, suggesting moderate faith in such assessments, but with a marginally higher opinion of personal judgment. One respondent warned of the dangers of over-relying on statistical analysis, suggesting that personal development, self-understanding and awareness are not easily statistically expressed, but are "as much valid outcomes as people kneeling at the mercy seat or becoming soldiers". Another challenged the way in which the Territory's statistical analysis is based on a sample period, which might distort the figures, given family absences and that school holidays could mean that some corps activities are suspended.

Most respondents added freeform comments on factors that would assist mission success.

One respondent reported that the corps had focused 10 years ago on mission and evangelism, but had failed to stress discipleship, leading to losses of people "when the



going got rough”. Their emphasis now is on discipleship, sharing their lives, and developing local leaders.

#### ***7.9.7 How the Salvation Army selects, prepares and develops its leaders***

This section of the questionnaire was subdivided, with separate subsections for officers, managers and for other leaders, with an additional section applicable to all respondents.

Officers were asked to assess the effectiveness of three separate aspects leading up to their appointment as officers. In respect of the assessment process for candidature for officer training, a mean of 5.21 was awarded (on the scale of Very low 1 to Very high 7), and mean scores of 4.89 each for their cadet training and for their assessment for commissioning.

On their personal suitability for the role that they were currently exercising, respondents were positive, rating it at 5.83 from the Salvation Army’s perspective, and 5.67 from their own. The degree of consultation involved in the respondent’s current appointment showed a mean of 4.89, but ratings included two 2s and a 1.

One officer commented “I think the Salvation Army is very good at providing formal training programmes but the “softer” development approaches of mentoring, coaching etc is patchy at best.” Another expressed the view that “The Salvation Army are always encouraging us to do further training and development. This opportunity is given in various ways to suit individuals . . . I find this helpful because it helps people to develop in the way that they find easiest. Not everybody is an academic and we all learn in different ways.” A third officer had some very specific comments:

“Although parts of the training i.e. Bible study/Doctrines/understanding people are helpful and needed within my every day job as an officer, there are lots of things that I am called to do as an officer that doesn’t get covered. I know they can’t train us on every scenario we may find ourselves in but things like basic housing regulations/etc. so that we know what to do when we meet a homeless

person, or detox/rehabilitation when we have to deal with alcoholics/drug users this would be more beneficial because these are the kinds of things we spend more of our time doing. I strongly feel that the training college doesn't equip officers to do the job."

Officers were also asked to comment on the effectiveness of the organization in planning a succession of appointments, and rated this with a mean of 5.18 from the organization's viewpoint, and 4.33 from their own.

Finally in this section, ratings were requested on two aspects of the performance management system, with its design and principles obtaining a mean of 4.39, but 3.72 for its practical operation.

Overall, this section showed reasonable approval for the selection and appointment of officers, but with a minority who were less satisfied, and some areas where satisfaction was lower than others.

Only two respondents to the leaders' questionnaire were non-officer centre managers, so the sample is particularly small. Whilst the recruitment process for managers differs from the initial appointment of officers, managers were also asked to rate the effectiveness of their appointment process, and a high mean of 6.00 resulted. An even more positive result was obtained when managers were asked – if they had changed appointment since their initial recruitment – how they rated the suitability of that appointment, firstly from their own viewpoint and secondly from that of the organization; in both cases a mean of 6.50 was recorded, compared with the 5.83 and 5.67 respectively recorded above for officers.

In-appointment training for managers' current appointment was variably rated, with a low mean of 3.00, and career management was also moderately rated, with means of 4.00 from the Territory's perspective, and 3.50 from the individual's. The design and

principles of the performance management system were rated at a mean of 5.00, but its practical operation at a more modest 4.00.

In the subsection for all respondents, professional development was rated at a mean of 3.86 and opportunities for self-development at 4.32.

#### ***7.9.8 How the Salvation Army leads and manages***

The first part of this section looked at the significance of mission, vision and values in providing a leadership and management climate. The importance of setting out these concepts was rated at a mean of 5.83, but the degree of success in setting them out in the Territory was rated only at 4.52, and their usefulness in practice at 4.83.

Respondents rated the degree to which they were set out in their own unit at 4.50 and their practical usefulness in their own unit at 4.65.

The next subsection covered the Territory's management or operational style. Its importance in achieving mission results was rated at a mean of 4.77. Respondents were also asked to evaluate this style on a scale from 1 Consultative through 4 Balanced to 7 Authoritarian. In terms of the current style, respondents recorded a mean of 5.13, with only two of 23 rating it as low as 3, and two rating it at 7. This was only a slight reduction from the mean of 5.26 when respondents were asked to assess the style as it was five years ago. When asked what management or operational style they would regard as most likely to be effective, a much reduced rating of 3.81 was recorded; and a still-lower 3.29 was recorded when respondents were asked with which style they would personally feel most comfortable. This suggests that a further move from the authoritarian extreme would be both personally welcome and regarded as organizationally effective.

Accountability and authority were then examined, with a working definition provided – the degree to which officers, others in charge of corps, or centre managers are held responsible for mission results, and are given commensurate authority to decide and act,

and adequate resources to achieve them. The importance of accountability received a mean rating of 5.57, contrasting markedly with the 3.82 rating on the level currently existing; respondents believed a level of 5.70 should exist. Slightly less dramatically, the existing level of authority was given a mean rating of 4.61, against the 5.13 that respondents felt should exist.

One officer commented “I do not feel accountable enough . . . Unless we get in trouble or ask for help there is not a culture of development and support in the army.” Another considered “I find it interesting that the level of accountability is very high in respect of finance/administration but there is almost no accountability in terms of the growth of the church, both numerically and in terms of discipleship.” A centre manager expressed the view “There is however an assumption that managers are all knowledgeable and need minimal oversight whilst I quite like this it is potentially dangerous.”

The level of guidance or direction received from Territorial or Divisional Headquarters was also examined. The current level from Territorial Headquarters was rated at a mean of 2.91, slightly higher than the 2.76 perceived as occurring five years ago. The usefulness of such guidance was rated at a mean of only 3.26, and the preferred level of guidance and direction to be received from this source was rated at 4.14.

Divisional Headquarters was seen as more relevant in this context. The current level of guidance or direction was assessed at a mean of 5.00, compared with 4.56 five years ago. Its helpfulness was rated at 4.82, and the preferred level of Divisional Headquarters guidance or direction at 5.09.

Leadership from both Territorial and Divisional Headquarters was then examined. The level of emphasis given to leadership by Territorial Headquarters was rated at a mean of 4.09, and its effectiveness at 3.43. The comparable ratings in respect of Divisional Headquarters were 5.10 and 5.05.

Several questions were asked in respect of communication within the Territory. The effectiveness of communication from Territorial Headquarters to local units was rated at 3.22, and to local team members at an even more modest 2.82. Communication upwards to Territorial Headquarters was rated slightly better at 3.45. The effectiveness of communication from Divisional Headquarters to local units fared better with a mean of 5.09, though with 4.41 to local team members; and communication upwards to Divisional Headquarters was rated at a mean of 5.33. The differential between how Territorial Headquarters and Divisional Headquarters are seen is likely of course to be partly a reflection of their different functional and structural purposes.

In terms of trust – defined for this purpose as confidence that another person or part of an organization will do what is necessary to support one appropriately in fulfilling one's own responsibilities – Territorial Headquarters's trust in corps and centres was rated at 3.96, compared with 5.09 from Divisional Headquarters; the units' own trust in Territorial and Divisional Headquarters was rated lower, with means of 3.48 and 4.67 respectively.

One aspect of management and personal style is the degree of personal stroking – the examples given in the questionnaire were words of encouragement or recognizing achievements, whether from above, from one's own team or from others. One officer showed little interest in stroking: "I don't do what I do to receive any praise. I do what I do for God and get my encouragement from him"; but overall respondents rated the motivational importance of stroking at a high 6.17 (only one rating – of 4 – was less than 5), but rated only at a mean of 4.30 the stroking that they actually received. One respondent commented on receiving personal strokes locally, rather than from Divisional or Territorial level. Another praised the degree of personal stroking from "THQ/DHQ", but went on to qualify this:

"Such words are encouraging but rarely specific in terms of understanding exactly what we are about. Much "stroking" covers up a lack of real understanding of the issues/realities facing the inner-city scenario.

“Also, when there has been awareness of challenging specific incidents or issues there have been again words of encouragement but little practical assistance or useful guidance/direction in dealing with the issues at hand.”

One officer expressed a concern that may be more widespread:

“I know that there is a lot of administration that needs to be completed to bring us in line with all of the government requirements, so I am not complaining but it does leave very little time to get on and do what God has called us to do. My days are very often fourteen hours long and most of that time is taken up with managing rather than being able to win souls. I know it is important for these things to be done though, so other than us all being able to afford a paid corps administrator, I can't see any other way around it.”

#### ***7.9.9 How the Salvation Army remunerates, rewards and motivates officers and employees***

The background to employment in the Territory is untypical. As with other nonprofits, an ethos of service and vocation is often part of the desire for employment, and as with other religiously-based organizations there is often this additional sense of religious mission. The position of officers is even more extreme. Officers are under a covenant rather than an employee contract; and although consultation and consideration for personal circumstances and preferences have become stronger in recent years, officers are still committed to go where they are sent, and to whatever responsibilities they are allocated. They are also subject to limited reward (receiving allowances rather than salaries) and restricted activities (for example, limitations on their freedom to write for publication), though they are furnished with accommodation and some other relevant benefits. The results of this part of the survey, in particular, must be read in this context.

In general, separate questions were asked for officers and for employees.

Officers were first asked to comment on the overall allowances package, in relation to their reasonable needs and expectations. The current position received a mean rating of 5.25, slightly higher than their assessment of the position 5 years ago at 4.75.

A list of six key categories of benefits had been identified by the researcher.

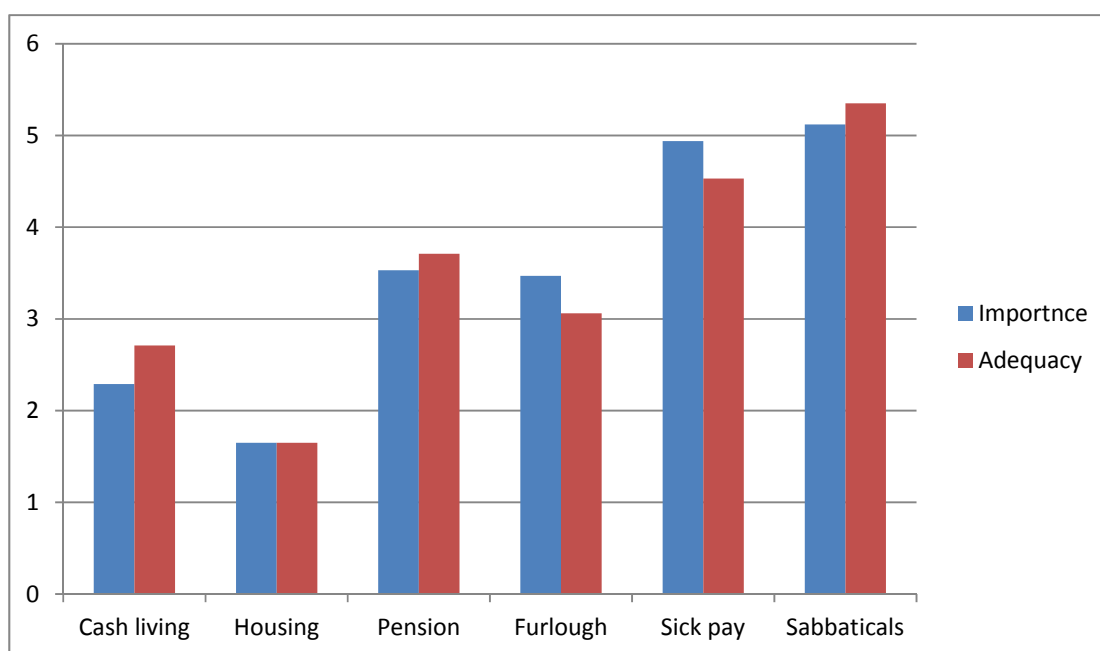
Respondents were asked to rank these, firstly in terms of their importance, and secondly in terms of the adequacy or appropriateness of what is provided. The most important or most adequately/appropriately provided was ranked as 1, and the least important or least adequately provided as 6. The results are shown in Table 7.3 and Figure 7.3. The numbers used are the mean rankings for each variable, and the methodology for this part of the section means that “the lower the statistic, the more important, or the better provided”.

There is a potential correlation that might be expected between subjective assessments of these categories, in that the first could tend to drive the second conversely. For example, an officer not interested in sabbaticals might rank it as 6 for importance; and feeling what was offered to be very reasonable in its adequacy for such a low priority might rank its adequacy at perhaps 2 or 3. In fact, the results do not show such a tendency - rankings for adequacy correlate directly with those for importance, with a very high positive coefficient of 0.97. This may suggest that the Territory has been successful in identifying officer preferences, and orienting benefits towards them.

Employees, with their more conventional employment packages, were not asked to rank components, but were simply asked to rate their employment package both in relation to the marketplace generally and to the non-profit market specifically. These received respective mean ratings of 3.50 and 4.50 on the scale of 1 – 7.

	Importance	Adequacy/appropriateness of what is provided
Cash living allowance	2.29	2.71
Housing	1.65	1.65
Pension arrangements	3.53	3.71
Furlough	3.47	3.06
Sick pay arrangements	4.94	4.53
Sabbaticals	5.12	5.35

**Table 7.3 Rankings for importance and adequacy of categories of officer benefit**



**Figure 7.3 Rankings for importance and adequacy of categories of officer benefit**

Finally, all respondents were asked to assess six stated categories of intrinsic reward, which might influence their satisfaction with their relationship with the Territory.

Again, respondents were asked to rank these, firstly in terms of their importance, and secondly in terms of the adequacy or appropriateness of what is provided. The results



are shown in Table 7.4 and Figure 7.4; as with officer benefits, the principle is “the lower the statistic, the more important, or the better provided”.

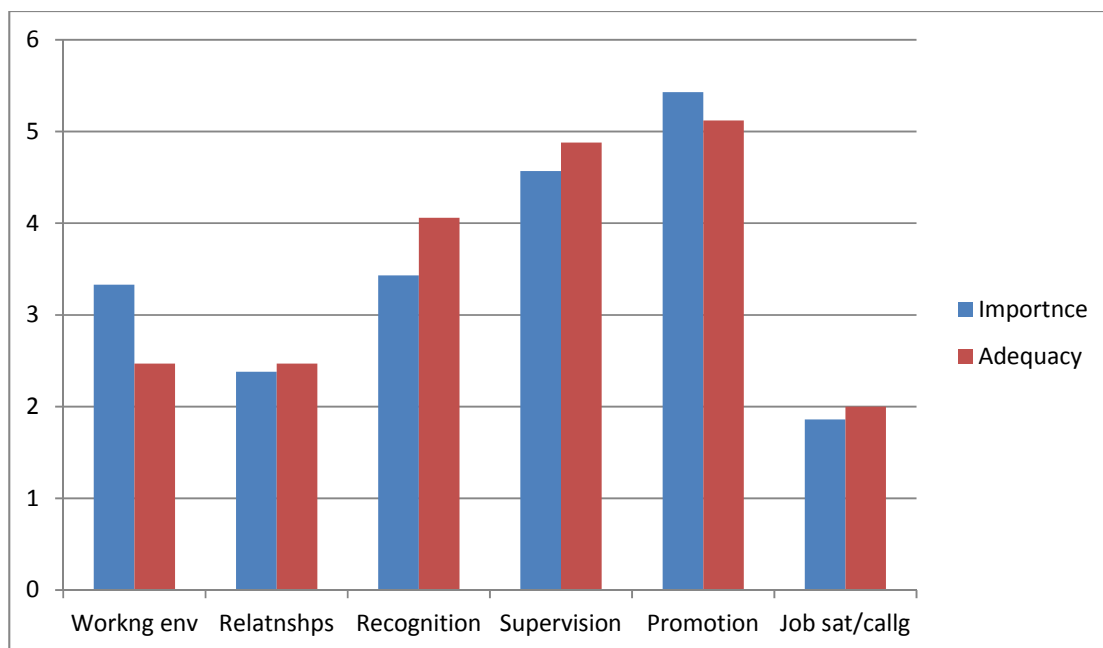
	Importance	Adequacy/appropriateness of what is provided
Working environment	3.33	2.47
Relationships with others	2.38	2.47
Recognition of achievements	3.43	4.06
Nature of supervision	4.57	4.88
Promotion opportunities	5.43	5.12
Job satisfaction/calling	1.86	2.00

**Table 7.4 Rankings for importance and adequacy of categories of intrinsic reward**

Overall, the same implication seems applicable as for officers’ extrinsic benefits – the Territory seems to have succeeded in matching intrinsic rewards to officer and employee perceptions of their importance, with a high positive coefficient of 0.93.

#### ***7.9.10 Resources and support***

The first questions in this section looked at the local availability of people. Asked to assess the leadership capabilities available in their team (excluding their own) respondents recorded a mean of 4.30. They were then asked to assess the overall adequacy of the people resource available to fulfil their mission, looking separately at adequacy of numbers, level of commitment, and level of effectiveness. These three variables received mean scores respectively of 4.22, 4.52 and 4.09 – all moderate assessments.



**Figure 7.4 – Rankings for importance and adequacy of categories of intrinsic reward**

Turning to overall resources (including funding, premises, specialist advice and support services) provided by Territorial and Divisional Headquarters, these were respectively given mean ratings of 3.96 and 4.70. However, respondents were then asked to rate seven individual resources provided by the Salvation Army, in relation to what is needed. The resultant mean ratings are shown in Table 7.5. These suggest reasonable appreciation for funding, premises and prayer support, but possible gaps in other categories.

Asked to rate the level of helpfulness of the Territory's policies and practices for allocating and prioritizing resources (as opposed to the actual amounts available), a modest mean score of 3.86 emerged.

Funding	4.61
Premises	4.83
Specialist advice	4.00
Prayer support	4.86
Evangelistic support activities	3.76
Social support activities	3.57
Other support activities	3.95

**Table 7.5 Ratings of individual resources provided**

Another part of this section looked at the packaged concepts and programmes (where established programmes existed with support available from Territorial or Divisional Headquarters). Various programmes were cited, but those most commonly encountered were Natural Church Growth, Alpha and Give to Grow. Respondents were asked to assess the degree and/or the quality of support received from Territorial or Divisional Headquarters, and the usefulness of the concept. A mean of 3.93 was obtained in respect of support (with a range of 1 – 6) and 5.11 for usefulness (with a range of 1 – 7). Clearly, very different opinions existed.

#### ***7.9.11 Prayer***

Not originally envisaged by the researcher, who had thought in terms of management rather than spiritual terms for the study, this was included as an additional influential lever because comments within and outside the pilot study suggested it as a critical factor. The researcher had concerns about asking respondents to assess such a subject, particularly their view of prayer support from others, but though some expressed reservations, most did not, and only one respondent failed to provide ratings for these questions, with one more partially doing so.

Asked to assess the importance of prayer in achieving mission results in the Territory, in the Division, and in their own units, respondents awarded mean scores respectively of 6.30, 6.20 and 6.57. This level of rating might, perhaps, be expected, but several ratings of 4 were included and somewhat surprisingly one of 2. By an oversight in questionnaire design, the latter variable was inadvertently repeated in the next question, so it was reassuring that virtually the same mean was registered at 6.62. The level of prayer support achieved in the individual unit was rated at 4.95, and that from Territorial and Divisional Headquarters respectively at 4.35 and 5.40.

#### ***7.9.12 Subsequent reflection on content of the leaders' questionnaire***

During data analysis it became clear that it would have been helpful to have asked leaders to rate separately and specifically the eleven influential levers, as was done in local questionnaires. For example, leaders were not asked in their questionnaire to specifically rate the importance of leadership. It would have been even more helpful to have asked leaders to rank them in priority order, which would have helped counter the risk of “Well, they’re all important” responses.

By contrast, rating the levers was included in the local questionnaire, to remedy the fact that it was impracticable to replicate there the fuller examination of the content of such levers for which the leaders' questionnaire was designed. It was also important not to extend the length of the leaders' questionnaire, as it already appeared from the pilot study that this could be inhibiting willingness to respond. Nevertheless, in retrospect this proved a gap in the data available from the leaders' questionnaire.

### **7.10 Results obtained from the local questionnaires**

#### ***7.10.1 Mission success in the corps or centre***

Overall mission success was rated with a mean of 4.23, and a range of 2 – 6. Its three components – saving souls, growing saints, and serving suffering humanity – were rated

at means of 3.69, 4.15 and 4.69. Unsurprisingly, the centres (with a relatively transient population) were rated lower on growing saints than the corps (mean 2.50 against 4.45), as well as on saving souls (3.00 against 3.82), but (again unsurprisingly) were rated higher on serving suffering humanity (6.00 against 4.45).

All but one of respondents who assessed overall mission success against what it was five years ago rated it much the same, or better (mean of 5.08, with a range of 3 – 7). On how far mission success was affected by local circumstances over that period, four respondents rated it much the same (4), three as slightly lower (3), three as slightly higher (5), and one as 6, giving a mean of 4.18. When comparing the three individual components of mission success with five years ago, saving souls and growing saints were both broadly seen as much the same (both with means of 4.50), but serving suffering humanity was rated slightly higher at 4.92.

The potential future for mission success over a five-year period was assessed slightly more highly by the corps respondents (mean 5.60) than by centres (mean 5.00).

#### ***7.10.2 How the Salvation Army leads and manages***

Respondents were generally positive on the importance of having mission, vision and values set out, with four ratings of 7, with only one rating (a 2) less than 4, and with a mean of 5.46. The degree of success in setting them out was less positively rated, with a mean of only 3.85 (slightly lower in the corps than in the centres). This is surprising and disappointing, as 11 of the 13 local questionnaires were completed after these concepts had been set out in *Salvationist* magazine. Even the remaining two questionnaires were completed after mission and vision statements had been published. The implication may be a need for regular reinforcement of these concepts. On their practical usefulness, a mean of 4.46 was recorded (though with centres more positive at 5.50 than corps at 4.27).

The Territory's managerial or operational style was measured on a scale of 1 for Consultative to 7 for Authoritarian. The current style was rated at a mean of 4.85, with corps at 4.82 slightly lower than centres at 5.00. Interestingly, when asked to assess the style as it was five years ago, centres recorded the same mean of 5.00, whereas corps respondents rated it at a slightly less authoritarian 4.40. On what style was most likely to be effective, a mean of 3.50 was recorded (3.55 from the corps, and 3.50 from the centres). When asked with what style they would personally be most comfortable, virtually the same mean was recorded at 3.54; predominantly respondents' views were close to what they felt was most effective. This divergence between styles preferred and actually perceived corresponds with the evidence from Beyer and Nutzinger (1993), cited in Torry (2005).

Communication within the Territory was rated at a mean of 3.42 upwards and 3.25 downwards; corps respondents gave a mean of 3.50 upwards and 3.40 downwards, and those from centres recorded 3.00 against 2.50.

### ***7.10.3 Practical activities***

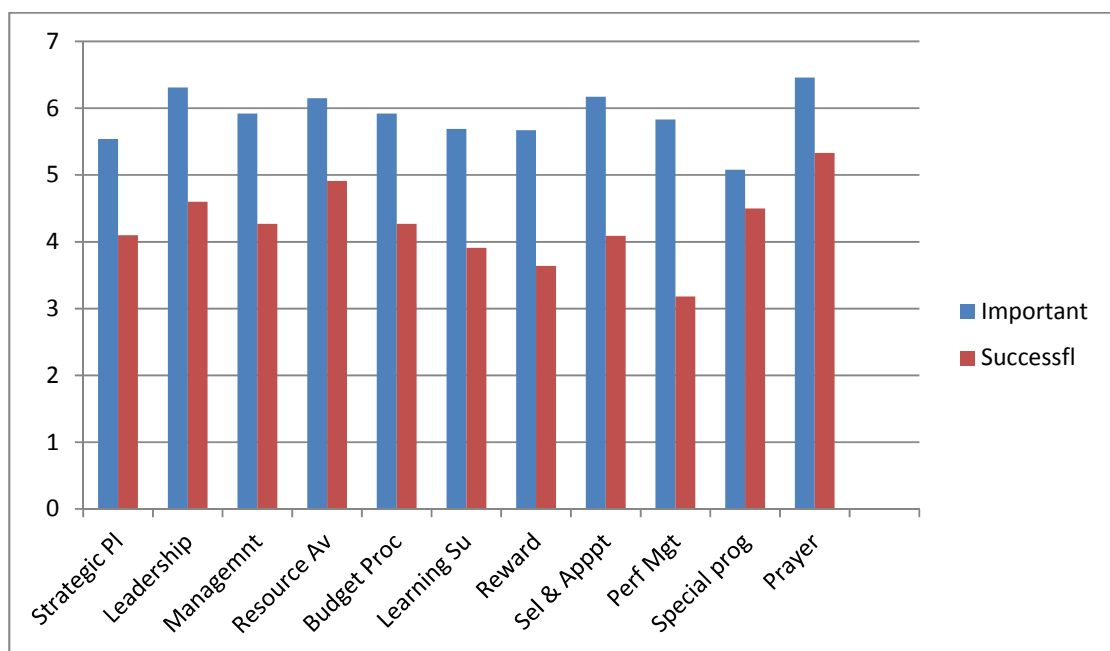
In rating the importance of each influential lever in translating strategy into results, respondents typically awarded relatively high ratings, the majority rating at 5.00 or above. A different position emerged when respondents were asked to assess how successful the Territory was at each of these activities. The highest means were for prayer at 5.33 and (possibly surprisingly) resource availability at 4.91; means for the other levers varied from 3.18 for performance management to 4.60 for leadership.

Thus the perception of a gap emerged in all categories between what is desirable and what is perceived. This is illustrated by Figure 7.5.

## 7.11 Results obtained from the interviews

### 7.11.1 General principles

This Section draws results from the interview data, using the process outlined in subsection 7.7.3. The categories were designed to reflect the substance of the results emerging, and thus differ slightly from those used for the structure of the interviews.



**Figure 7.5 Local questionnaires: views on importance of strategic levers compared with degree of success in achieving**

### 7.11.2 Process of interview data analysis

To help analyze interview data, a Data Analysis Coding chart was used (shown as Appendix M), and relevant passages in the transcripts were coded. From the coded transcripts, a summary spreadsheet (Data Display – Interviews Summary) was prepared (shown as a pro forma in Appendix S), showing in abbreviated form key comments emerging from each interview, analysed in terms not only of the influential levers but

also of other key issues. The cell size allowed 210 characters in each cell; to support this, abbreviations were extensively used. Where appropriate, the same summarized comment was repeated under different headings. A set of decision rules supported the population of the summary:

1. Clear view expressed – significant qualifiers also included in display
2. No evaluation or commentary at this stage
3. Comments repeated in other cells, where relevant
4. To protect usability, content limited to cell size – abbreviations used where necessary
5. But nothing significant excluded to reflect point 4 – if necessary, reference made to separate Note
6. Question mark used whenever context requires reference back to transcript to ascertain meaning

The purpose of this summary was to provide a systematic basis for beginning to identify and analyze key themes emerging from the interview data.

The full summary is not reproduced in this thesis, as the nature of many comments – particularly when read in relation to each other – could indicate the identity of some participants. The categories within the spreadsheet differ from those in the Data Analysis Coding Chart as applying the chart to the interview transcripts had revealed that some categories in the chart were more useful than others, so the spreadsheet categories were simplified to reduce duplication and facilitate analysis, taking care not to lose valuable data in the process.

From perusal of this summary, a further summary was prepared (Themes emerging from Data Display – Interviews) of those comments that appeared to be either significant to individual respondents, or widely held. At this stage, the researcher continued to attempt not to apply personal interpretation or judgment, beyond that necessary for summarization. This summary – in its final form – appears as Appendix L.



Following this process, the themes were set aside for consideration in the light of the analysis to be obtained from the leaders' and local questionnaires.

#### ***7.11.3 Strategy, strategic planning and direction***

Strategic planning was viewed as important, but not as a strength. Uncertainty existed about whether a strategy existed for the Territory, what it was, and whether one was in fact appropriate. However, the strategic priority of discipleship was sometimes stressed. Changes in strategic approaches over the years had been too frequent, changing with changes of leadership. The importance of strategic planning being "bottom-up" emerged strongly, but recognizing the need for this to be guided by established principles. One respondent emphasized the Mintzberg approach of "crafting" strategy.

Vision and values statements were generally seen as having importance, but despite the recent relaunch held much less attention than the mission statement, which was almost universally known, highly regarded, and seen as providing important direction as well as tests of performance and as a guard against strategic drift. Locally-tailored strategies, with strong demographic fit, were seen as vital, as was the facility for strategy to develop and respond to other changes.

Local authority policies impact on the Territory's social services policy, though views differed as to how far this might be problematic. Certainly, the danger that the strategic fit with local authorities might conflict with that of the Territory was recognized.

#### ***7.11.4 Mission success***

There was clear agreement that of the three elements of the mission statement, serving suffering humanity was the most strongly performed. The dominant view was that saving souls was the most difficult, but also the weakest in performance. Growing saints was seen as crucial, possibly improving, but having been underemphasized in the

past; the strategic emphasis on discipleship was an important potential contributor. Programmes needed to be developed specifically to achieve mission results, not as “the right thing to do”.

#### ***7.11.5 Leadership***

This received strong endorsement as a need. One Divisional Commander, when asked about the biggest barriers to mission success, responded:

“Leadership, leadership, leadership. If you’ve got a leader, it’s going to happen, wherever you put them. There are officers in this Division I know are exceptional wherever I put them, regardless. Whether there’s been none [mission success] for fifty, sixty years, and whatever happened five years ago. Wherever I put these folk, they will be good. That’s leadership.”

Conversely, another Divisional Commander doubted the wisdom of putting a good leader into a situation where leadership was not considered to be the real problem in that particular situation,

The strength of leadership was seen as variable. Not all people had the same spiritual gifts, and the need for pastoral as well as managerial leadership meant that measures such as leadership teams should be considered, as should attention in officer appointments to matching strengths more closely to situational needs. Leadership must be Christian leadership, focused on church needs. But leadership should not be seen as a panacea for every problem.

#### ***7.11.6 Management***

Under this heading are incorporated comments overlapping with some of the other influential levers, and other relevant areas.

Management was seen as vital – but though necessary, it was insufficient, and must not be treated as an end in itself. The predominant view was that the Territory was not good at it, though successfully making efforts to improve. One officer with significant business experience stressed the importance of effective management in the Territory, but considered that this must be carried out by avoiding excessive business terminology. Implications of the officer/manager divide caused minor discomfort on both sides, and there was concern about the level of professionalism in management, with more management training needed, including for officers. There was a concern about over-management. There was some evidence that useful systems were being brought in – for example appraisals, the Vocational Development Pathway, and appointments consultation – but that these were patchy in implementation and not always wholeheartedly endorsed, whether by those who should be acting (for example, in appraisals) or by less-than-enthusiastic recipients.

One Divisional official thought that autocracy remained important to the Salvation Army, but that this was not necessarily incompatible with freedom and empowerment.

Accountability was seen as an important part of management, including its encouragement of responsibility and the protection it could give against strategic drift. There was a feeling – including some comparison with other organizations – that neither accountability nor authority was high enough. But it was important that accountability should be seen as a positive attribute, and this would require culture change. There was also a warning about the possible danger of over-focussing on those things that were visibly accountable.

A significant view, particularly coupled with concerns about the quality of leadership or management or both, and the possibility that individuals were capable of one but lacked the gift of the other, was the desirability of supporting effective leaders with effective managers, by careful appointment in teams.

### ***7.11.7 Resources***

The general view was that “we could always do with more, but we have what we need”; but there was also a view that the presence of constraints was positive, in ensuring a focus on mission. This importance of focusing resources on mission plans and needs was stressed (there were views that this was not well done, and that budgets tended to be tinkered with rather than re-thought); and fear was also expressed that a lack of clarity in strategy impacted against optimal use of the available resources – for example, there was a suggestion of a reluctance to close small corps.

Trained people were in short supply, not least officers, though in some cases imaginative use was made of retired officers. The view was expressed that greater risk-taking in local appointments might be justified to help overcome the reluctance of individuals to commit. Lacking enough local support, officers’ time was being diverted into housekeeping activities in addition to administrative burdens; there was some suggestion that more centralization of administration to divisions might assist. There was also concern that the availability of external funding could tend to steer social services policy.

### ***7.11.8 Learning support***

This was seen as much better than in the past, and generally well regarded. But not all officers took up opportunities available, and there were concerns about perpetual students, or conversely of creating unreal expectations. Nor were all courses regarded as accessible. Management training was seen as necessary. Mentoring was also seen as important.

### ***7.11.9 Reward***

The Territory is “not into tangible rewards”. For officers, attitudes to material reward varied somewhat, but acceptance of the sacrificial element seemed universal, and the

general view was that rewards were adequate. The fulfilment of both the organization's mission and of personal vocations was seen as a key element of intrinsic reward both for officers and employees. Valuing people was also key, and an emphasis by the Territorial Commander on valuing officers was noted.

#### ***7.11.10 Selection and appointment***

The Territory had done much to improve this, but it remained an area of widespread concern ("not fit for purpose" was one comment), particularly given the freedom surrendered by officers in their covenant. The Vocational Development Pathway was valuable, but was not fully used, and there were dangers of creating a career progression mindset. Consultation and profiling were useful, but of limited value given potential conflicts between the views of corps, officer and the Division or Territory.

Appointments were made sensibly, but the process was seen as too lengthy and complex, and despite recent changes one view was that the time spent in particular appointments still tended to be too short. One officer commented that some officers in the Division were now "on their sixth Divisional leader". Such limited time was seen as creating a danger of inhibiting change, but conversely also as creating a danger of excessive change. One Divisional Director suggested a direct correlation in corps between the length of time in appointment and mission success. Amongst both employees and officers there were concerns about the use of officers in quasi-professional or administrative posts; some were not thought to be gifted in managerial roles, and in some cases were thought to be uncomfortable with them.

#### ***7.11.11 Performance management***

There were strong views that the Territory was at last beginning to tackle this area of concern, with greater emphasis on the subject, and a willingness to tackle poor performance as well as develop performance generally. But appraisals were not always being done well or at all; and there was some concern about a restriction against an

employed manager being able to appraise an officer, even though the former might be the latter's line manager. It seemed clear that the quality of performance management varied between locations. Views differed, but the general view was that it is not well done.

#### ***7.11.12 Packaged concepts and programmes***

These were widely regarded as useful tools, and appropriate to many situations. Support and encouragement were needed, and good support materials existed (though these were not always fully used) as well as advice. But views differed on whether packages should be used as designed, or tailored to local needs or wishes.

#### ***7.11.13 Prayer***

The importance of this was consistently emphasized. One respondent described it, of all the levers, as "probably the most neglected and the most needed", and another commented that it was important, but "we're not good at it". However, it seems that these concerns amount to a wish to raise further a high degree of attention already given to the topic. One respondent suggested the importance of Bible study as a corollary, and another stressed a still wider context, of prayer (though important) being only part of the "spiritual climate" which was essential. The latter phrase was not specifically used by other respondents, but the researcher's retrospective view based on the content and atmosphere of the interviews is that it would have been widely supported.

#### ***7.11.14 History and culture***

The history and culture of the Salvation Army were frequently referred to in the interviews, with some concern that analogies from this history were too often shallow and missed the essence. The fear was expressed that William Booth, the founder, was quoted sometimes as an authority but with an inadequate understanding of the true essence of how he actually thought and operated; his passion for God and people, his

pragmatism and his entrepreneurship should not be underestimated. The need was to take from the past what was relevant and useful today. There was a strong and widespread view that the current organization was very different from that of even 20 years ago; one respondent suggested that “living in the past” should now be seen as relating to 1965 rather than 1865 (the latter being the year of the organization’s foundation in its early form).

The current situation was seen as one of great diversity, though with the organization’s distinctive features still remaining. There was more willingness to challenge now, which needed to be accompanied by greater openness and a freedom to fail. But a “club mentality” still existed in some corps, as well as a tendency in some cases to over-focus on music, against other spiritual gifts. People often brought stronger skills than in the past, but were less willing to commit and accept responsibility. Alternative opportunities and conflicting demands on people’s time (especially on Sundays) added to the problem.

A powerful comment by one Divisional official links culture with measurement:

“And what you’ve really sparked me off into thinking, which I’m quite interested about, is the culture of the organization . . . Now, I have a real concern that we go from programme to programme to programme, when to me the business world is telling us what the Bible taught us 2,000 years ago, that it’s all about culture . . . And if we’ve got a truly Christian culture, where we trust each other, and there’s openness and there’s real sharing, then yes, the statistics will play their part, but more importantly we’ll sit around at a table, and we’ll talk about what’s happening . . . we will then get a real view of what’s going on.”

#### ***7.11.15 Measurement***

Recording of statistics was seen as essential. For social services, this is a requirement of funding organizations; but even for corps this is important – one respondent

commented that spiritual growth should lead to corps growth – and measurements are possible, even for saving souls. But there is considerable discomfort with the concept of measuring success. One comment was that informed and open discussion is a stronger guide than statistics; another respondent suggested instead looking for “affirmation” – multiple supplementary evidence; one said that Natural Church Development suggests that the quality of church should be worked on, with the quantity left to God; one commented that “messy success beats documented decline”. One respondent commented that “The Bible calls us to be faithful, it doesn’t necessarily call us to be successful”.

#### ***7.11.16 Officer time and priorities***

There was widespread concern that pastoral care and religious responsibilities might be suffering from what was perceived as increased administration, not only in management administration, but as officers increasingly had to take on housekeeping and local officer tasks, because of inadequate local support. Increasing such local support might require greater readiness to take risks with local appointments. The time factor affected returns and the supply of information, especially at peak times and when returns overlapped. There was a general perception that the urgent may drive out the important, although one respondent suggested that a personality that thrives on administration may allocate time to this, whatever relief is given. Nevertheless, there was a view that further centralization of administration might be desirable.

#### ***7.11.17 Strategic drift***

This concept was readily understood; a variety of dangers that might provoke it were suggested. Possible protections against it were suggested as including clear aims and objectives; accountability; and monitoring.



#### ***7.11.18 Structure***

The research did not envisage structure as being within its remit, but some structure-related issues emerged. The Territorial Headquarters/Divisional Headquarters hierarchy was thought by some to be excessive, leading to problematic hierarchical delays in decision making; and functional departments in Territorial Headquarters were not always thought to be linking well. But the structure was seen as supportive and helpful in other ways. The possibility of greater centralization enabling commanding officers to focus more on their key role has already been mentioned, and one suggestion was that a smaller Territorial Headquarters, and perhaps 10 larger divisions, might provide a basis for this.

#### ***7.11.19 Critical success factors***

One concern of the researcher in the pilot study was that the structure of interviews might not sufficiently focus the comments of respondents on positive steps; so respondents in the main study interviews were asked to suggest critical success factors. Leadership was the factor most frequently mentioned.

### **7.12 Results obtained from the statistical data**

#### ***7.12.1 Statistics employed***

The statistical data used membership and attendances figures for the two years 2005 and 2010.

During the pilot study, statistical data on membership was sought through the leaders' questionnaires, but this approach proved unsuitable, partly because of fears for data quality, partly because of the possibility that some respondents would fail to supply it, but also because of a danger that even asking for something to be "looked up" might discourage completion of the questionnaires. Instead, it was agreed with the Territory

that raw membership and attendances data would be supplied from Territorial records, including data for both the pilot study and main study samples. At the same time, it was decided to update the pilot study years upon which the data was based, from 2003 and 2008 to 2005 and 2010, to provide consistency with the main study.

The non-randomness of the samples has been a challenge throughout the research, but the researcher nevertheless thought it justifiable to attempt to contribute to and to verify the conclusions statistically as far as could be done.

#### ***7.12.2 Original proposals for statistical evaluation***

The research proposal accepted the principle of substantial dependence on qualitative data, and on the use of personal judgment. However, as a means of triangulation it planned to build on Escott's (1996) simple growth index, by using a weighted membership index to measure growth. Instead of Escott's ten-year period, a five-year period would be adopted, given that the bulk of the current research would look at judgmental qualitative views, and a longer period would exacerbate the dangers of a recency effect, particularly since most leaders would not have been in post for the full period.

#### ***7.12.3 Sample used***

For attendances and membership calculations in this Section, data have been used from the full sample of corps and units invited to participate from each Division in the study, rather than restricting the data to those corps and centres that responded. This provides a wider and more representative base for calculations, comparisons and results.

#### ***7.12.4 Attendances data***

Whilst data are maintained on a variety of corps activities – from meetings (services) to social support activities, and even sporting events – detailed examination of these is

beyond the scope of this research, which has concentrated on total attendances, thus recording each systematic encounter between an individual (member or not) and the corps.

From the raw data, a spreadsheet was compiled comparing 2005 and 2010 total attendance data by individual corps, by the sample within each of the three divisions, and overall for the three samples. Intermediate years were not addressed. Some data were not available, or in one case were clearly incorrect; in such cases the researcher used the nearest available year instead. The spreadsheet is not reproduced as a data table in this thesis, to avoid possible embarrassment that could result from publishing specific figures of individual corps, centres or divisions to a wider audience than those to whom it would normally be available, particularly as many corps and centres within the part of the Divisions used in these statistics chose not to participate.

Attendances across the three samples totalled 85,024 in 2010, as against 96,007 in 2005, giving an index of 89 (2010 attendances as a percentage of 2005). Of the 37 corps for which figures were available, 14 recorded increased attendances, 22 recorded falling attendances, and one unchanged. The mean across all three samples fell from 2,595 in 2005 to 2,298 in 2010, giving mean weekly attendances of 50 in 2005 and 44 in 2010.

As suggested earlier in this Section, attendance numbers are more usefully seen when compared with membership data, in subsection 7.12.6.

#### ***7.12.5 Membership data***

As was done for attendances data, a spreadsheet was compiled comparing 2005 and 2010 membership data by individual corps, by the sample within each of the three divisions, and overall for the three samples. Again, intermediate years were not addressed. For the same reason as with attendances data, the spreadsheet is not reproduced here.

Three categories of membership data are particularly important – soldiers, adherents, and junior soldiers – and the membership statistics used for this research were limited to those three categories, which were however separately listed and totalled within each corps, each divisional sample, and overall, in each case for the years 2005 and 2010. A separate category of recruits was not included, as recruits are not yet members (unless already adherents or junior soldiers); the numbers are relatively modest – a total of 82 across the samples in 2010, compared with total membership of 2,489 .

Three indices were calculated in respect of each corps, each divisional sample, and overall for the combined sample.

The “Escott index” recreates in this context the simple index used by Escott (1996) in his review of church growth issues in the Territory. This expresses the later year as a percentage of the earlier, which (as Escott explained) has the benefit of providing a positive number, with 100 representing no change, any lower statistic representing numerical decline, and any higher statistic representing numerical growth. His index covered a period from 1982 to 1991, and (whilst recognizing complicating factors) he recorded a mean index over that period of 78 – in other words, a 22% decline in soldiership.

Escott’s index included only soldiers, the key membership group; this is still regarded as the ideal form of membership to which it is hoped that others may ultimately progress. However, the current researcher, whilst retaining the Escott index, extended it, for two reasons:

1. Adherents have become increasingly important in various parts of the world, including this Territory, where at December 2009 they totalled 9,469, a significant addition to the 30,902 soldiers (The Salvation Army (2010b)).
2. Junior soldiers – totalling 4,464 at the same time point – are a significant source (possibly the most significant) of future soldiership.

Accordingly, it was decided to create two additional indices. Index A uses all three membership categories, but weights adherents and junior soldiers at 0.5 each, against 1.0 for (senior) soldiers. Whilst arbitrary (since the contribution of individuals varies enormously), the weighting makes allowance for an assumption that adherents and junior soldiers may have less practical impact on corps activities and mission results than soldiers. To some degree, this weighting approach corresponds with that described by Larsson (1988), and mentioned in Section 3.7. Index B recognizes the heaviness of that assumption, and adds the three categories together, unweighted. All three indices were calculated in respect of each corps, comparing 2010 with 2005.

The analysis in Tables 7.6 – 7.9 uses actual membership numbers, rather than these indices, which are considered later.

Table 7.6 shows that across the combined sample, membership in all three categories fell, and although the overall total fall was 12.5%, the three categories show significant differences, suggesting particular grounds for concern in respect of junior soldiership, from which many future soldiers emerge.

Reasons for increases or decreases in membership include transfers of individuals or families between corps. Although these will not affect overall Territorial numbers, the impact upon membership numbers in a small corps (and thus upon all three indices) can be significant if, for example, a family of two adult soldiers and two or three junior soldiers transfers into or out of a small corps.

	2005	2010	% change
Soldiers	1,933	1,679	- 13.1%
Adherents	564	555	- 1.6 %
Junior soldiers	348	255	- 26.7 %
Total	2,845	2,489	- 12.5 %

**Table 7.6 Changes in membership, 2005 - 2010**

An interesting pattern emerges when growth or decline in total membership is measured against the size of the initial membership. For this purpose, the 37 corps and centres for which statistics were available for both years were divided into three groups where 2005 total membership was respectively 30 or fewer, 31 to 100, or over 100. The results are shown in Table 7.7.

	2005 Membership 30 or fewer	2005 Membership 31 to 100	2005 Membership over 100
Population of corps	11	17	9
Growing – no. (%)	5 (45%)	4 (24%)	2 (22%)
Static – no. (%)	3 (27%)	0	0
Declining – no. (%)	3 (27%)	13 (76%)	7 (78%)

**Table 7.7 Membership changes 2005 – 2010 in relation to membership starting position (percentages)**

Whilst the sample is small and potentially unrepresentative (not least in relation to geography) it suggests that growth may be greater, or decline smaller, in smaller corps than in larger ones. Of course, adding or losing one member causes a more significant statistical impact in a small corps than a large one; but it is also arguably more difficult to achieve.

This evidence might suggest a negative causal link between the size of the corps and growth – in effect, a negative economy of scale. Small size tends to restrict the ability of a corps to operate the full typical model of Salvation Army activity, which might be thought detrimental to growth; but it is possible that other factors – such as greater informality, or increased personal commitment – may bring benefits from relative smallness. There is insufficient evidence from the research to answer this question.

Table 7.8 moves from percentages of corps growing, remaining static or declining in membership, to examine actual numbers of increase or decrease in membership, and the percentage change. On average, small corps have grown significantly in total membership (though not evenly spread), but medium and larger corps have each seen a decline.

Clearly within each group of corps of a given size, there are variations. Table 7.9 demonstrates the range experienced in absolute numbers.

Looked at statistically, there remains – as might be expected – a high correlation between 2005 and 2010 total memberships, standing at 0.75, 0.71 and 0.94 respectively for the small, medium and large groups.

	2005 Membership 30 or fewer	2005 Membership 31 to 100	2005 Membership Over 100
Population of corps	11	17	9
Total absolute increase/(decrease)	45	(165)	(236)
% increase/(decrease)	29	(15)	(15)

**Table 7.8 Membership changes 2005 – 2010 in relation to membership starting position (absolute numbers)**

Interestingly, but coincidentally, on average little difference was revealed between the three indices, the means for the Escott Index, Index A and Index B across the sample each being 87 – thus demonstrating the decline in each case. The same point is also demonstrated by correlation coefficients of 0.76 between the 2005-2009 Index B (total absolute membership) and the Escott index, and 0.98 between Index B and Index A. But for individual corps, the differences could be substantial. One small corps, for example,

	2005 Membership 30 or fewer	2005 Membership 31 to 100	2005 Membership Over 100
Population of corps	11	17	9
Biggest increase (absolute)	21	11	5
Biggest decrease (absolute)	4	40	67

**Table 7.9 Membership changes 2005 – 2010 in relation to membership starting position (variations within groups)**

appears to have been successful in converting adherent membership to soldiership over the period, but with a fall in total numbers – the respective results for the three indices were 275, 113 and 79.

The principal results seen from the analysis are:

- membership in the sample fell by 12.5% over the period, but although modest in the category of adherents at 1.6% was a more significant 13.1% for soldiers, and no less than 26.7% for junior soldiers.
- 45% of corps with a membership of 30 or fewer grew over this period, compared with 24% for those with a membership of 31 to 100, and 22% of those with a membership over 100
- although 27 % of the corps with memberships of 30 or fewer declined in numbers over the period, this compared with 76% for those with a membership of 31 to 100, and 78% of those with a membership over 100
- corps with a membership of 30 or fewer actually increased in membership numbers by 29% over this period, compared with a decrease of 15% each for those with a membership of 31 to 100, and those with a membership over 100.



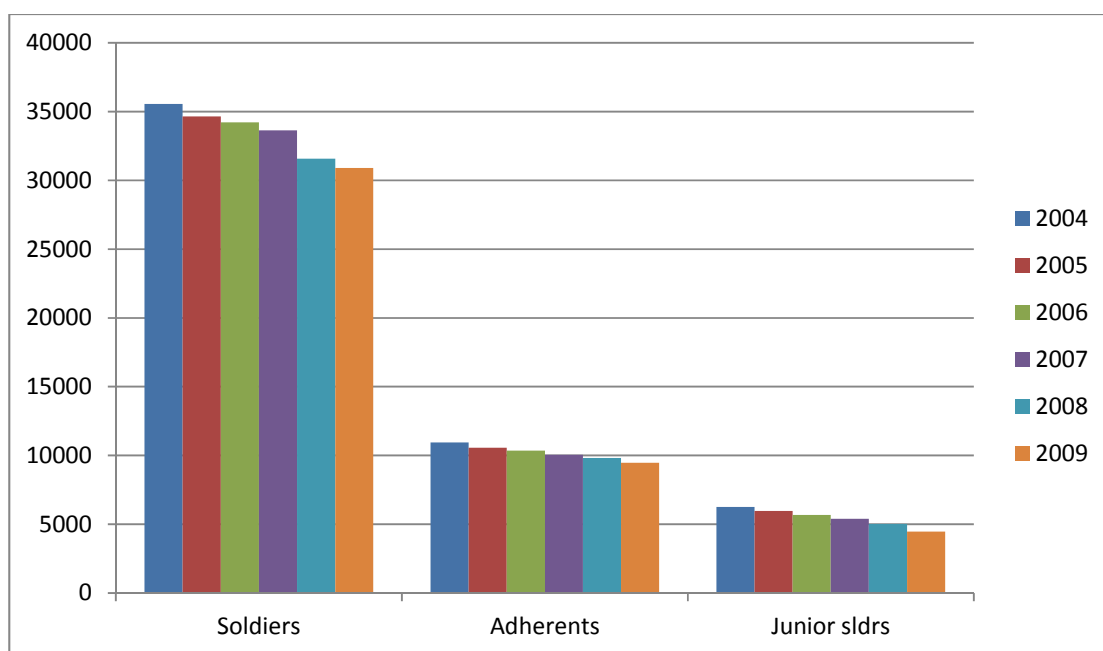
The sample is small and not statistically representative, but suggests

- (a) a general pattern (with exceptions) of membership decline, across all sizes of corps
- (b) the likelihood of a numerical decline, as well as its typical size, tends to vary directly with the size of the corps
- (c) conversely, small sizes of corps show a higher probability of growth than medium or larger ones
- (d) the alternative indices suggested are useful in drawing attention to significant changes between the member categories, alongside the changes in total numbers.

Despite the statistical unreliability of the sample, other evidence confirms the downward trend in membership. The Territory's *Salvationist* magazine regularly publishes statistics for gross additions to the membership, but not gross reductions, nor net additions (or, perhaps more likely, net reductions). However, the annual *The Salvation Army Year Book*, published by the international Salvation Army, indicates membership numbers for each territory with a slight time-lag. The Territory's statistics for the most recent six years, are shown in Figure 6.6 and Table 6.10, and (although not for the same period as the research) confirm the trend.

These figures become even more concerning when expressed as year-on-year percentage reductions, as shown in Table 7.11, again particularly in respect of junior soldiers.

The absence to date of published 2010 figures for the Territory prevents a direct comparison with the 2005-2010 statistics used for the current research sample, but Table 6.12 compares the published Territory figures for the five-year period 2004-2009 with the five-year 2005-2010 figures from the current research sample, accepting the mismatch of dates.



**Figure 7.6 Territory membership statistics 2004 – 2009**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Soldiers	35,555	34,652	34,222	33,632	31,575	30,902
Adherents	10,945	10,558	10,350	10,052	9,818	9,469
Junior soldiers	6,262	5,968	5,684	5,392	5,022	4,464
Total	52,762	51,178	50,256	49,076	46,415	44,835

**Table 7.10 Territory membership statistics 2004 - 2009**

	2005/2004	2006/2005	2007/2006	2008/2007	2009/2008
Soldiers	2.54	1.24	1.72	6.12	2.13
Adherents	3.54	1.97	2.88	2.33	3.55
Junior soldiers	4.69	4.76	5.14	6.86	11.11
Total	3.00	1.80	2.35	5.42	3.40

**Table 7.11 Territory membership percentage reductions 2004 - 2009**

This shows an identical pattern in the decline in soldiers, a broadly similar decline of junior soldiers, but a much smaller decline of adherents in the research sample, although the percentages of adherents in the total membership as calculated here were similar, with 20.7% for the Territory in 2004, and 19.8% for the research sample in 2005. The samples from three Divisions varied, one showing an attrition in adherents of 2.8%, and another of 4.9%, but the third increased its adherents by 6.9%; thus all three parts of the sample performed materially better in this respect than the Territory as a whole. This may reflect a bias in the sample, but it has not been practicable to investigate it further.

Another insight comes from comparison of the 2005 figures for membership per corps (a mean of 77) with estimates quoted in Brierley (2005) (p.59) for other churches in the same year – 115 overall (down from 130 in 1990), including 970 for Orthodox, 360 for Catholic, but only 83 for Anglican, and 49 for Methodist. Thus despite the smallness of some corps (as the sample illustrates), mean corps membership is in the range of the most comparable churches, although the definitions of membership may not be consistent.

#### ***7.12.6 Combination of membership data with attendances data***

Despite the limitations in available data, a comparison between membership and attendances is interesting. Whilst one might assume that regular attendees of a corps – or any church – would tend to be or to become members, there may be a societal tendency for individuals not to become formal members of organizations but simply to receive the benefits without formal membership if the rules allow this.

It is possible, therefore, that individuals who might otherwise consider becoming members may choose not to do so, in which event non-member attendances might increasingly become a partial replacement of membership. For a corps there may also be an impact from a belief in the Territory that a prime opportunity for religious recruitment is to attract individuals not only to services but also into social and other

	Decrease - soldiers	Decrease – adherents	Decrease – junior soldiers	Decrease – total
Territory 2004-2009	4,653 (13.1%)	1,476 (13.5%)	1,798 (28.7%)	7,927 (15.0%)
Research sample 2005-2010	254 (13.1%)	9 (1.6%)	93 (26.7%)	356 (12.5%)

**Table 7.12 Comparison of Territory membership numbers 2004-2009 with sample membership numbers 2005-2010**

activities, and use these and personal influence to encourage deeper and wider participation. Thus if such a strategy were successful, one would expect to see growing attendances beyond those of members.

Consequently, a spreadsheet was constructed, of which a pro forma copy appears as Appendix T, enabling comparison of a weekly average of total attendances data in the samples for the two years of 2005 and 2010 with each other, and with total membership data for the same two years.

An index was created for each of the years – calculated as (attendances\*100/membership) – to show the change in the relationship. Thus an index figure of 100 shows that on average each member attended once weekly; an index figure above 100 shows more than one weekly attendance on average, and conversely an index figure below 100 shows less than one such attendance. Of course, since many attendances are likely to be by non-members (for the reason explained above) if each member attended once weekly, the index would almost certainly be above 100.

Whilst somewhat arbitrary, the criterion of one weekly attendance by each member as a touchstone is not unreasonable. Research on behalf of the Tearfund Charity, with a representative sample of 7,000 adults in the United Kingdom, showed that 10% of

adults in the population attend church at least weekly, with another 5% at least monthly (Ashworth and Farthing (2007)).

But of the 37 corps in the combined sample, only 8 had index figures above 100 in 2005, with 27 below 100 and two figures unavailable. In 2010 the position was similar, with 8 corps exceeding 100, one actually on 100, one unavailable, and the remaining 27 below. Across the whole sample, the mean indices were 65 for 2005 and 66 for 2010 – in other words, average attendances (even counting the non-members hopefully attracted to attend) fell below membership by a third. Overall, membership fell by 12.5% over the five year period, against a slightly smaller fall of 11.4% in attendances. Statistically, the correlation between total membership numbers and attendances varied widely between the three samples used in the research and over time. One sample had a weak correlation of 0.18 in 2005 falling to 0.02 in 2010; for another, a strong 0.84 swung to a weak -0.24; the third retained a strong positive correlation with 0.89 rising to 0.94.

These figures cover a wide variety of cases, and must be cautiously interpreted. Many members are elderly or sick or both, and attend rarely; and holidays and other commitments take a toll. But despite the growing emphasis on creating events to attract attendance by non-members, the indices suggest that attendances are not offsetting the fall in membership.

### **7.13 Results obtained from Mission Success Matrices**

The mission success matrix was completed by Divisional Commanders to indicate their assessment of each unit in the sample in respect of various aspects of mission success, now, 5 years ago, and potentially for 5 years in the future. This was designed to enable comparison with the assessment of the same variables by the commanding officers of corps or managers of centres, to examine the degree of consistency.

In the event only two Divisional Commanders completed mission success matrices. Sixteen units received ratings both from Divisional Commanders and from local leaders, and thus provide the sample for those tests that apply to ratings of current mission success; for other ratings, the number of units with usable sample data varied between 14 and 16.

The small sample sizes limited the possibility of valid statistical inferences, and there are other important limitations in assessing the results – seldom would both the respondent and the Divisional Commander have been in place 5 years before, and possibly neither was; and future forecasting is precarious and subjective. It has not been possible, therefore, to establish reliable results from this particular research instrument.

#### **7.14 Divisional Commander Questionnaires**

As only three Divisional Commander questionnaires were completed, confidentiality risks preclude a separate analysis in this thesis, although the content has been taken into account in other parts of the analysis.

#### **7.15 Summary**

This Chapter has summarised the results obtained from the data sources described in previous Chapters. Chapter 8 reassesses the literature and addresses the research theory in the light of these results.

## **CHAPTER 8 – LITERATURE REAPPRAISAL AND THEORY FORMULATION**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This Chapter uses the results of Chapter 7 to revisit the review of relevant literature set out in Chapter 3, and to formulate a research theory.

The content of this Chapter is then incorporated into the discussion in Chapter 9.

### **8.2 Reappraisal of the literature**

#### ***8.2.1 Introduction***

This section sets out to reappraise the literature review, and where necessary augment it. Re-consideration of the literature review and additions to it have continued throughout the research process and the writing of this thesis.

The literature review provided background to the research, but proved of relatively limited value in practice, because of

- the variety of topics potentially relevant to the research (covered in section 8.2.2 below)
- the limited amount of directly relevant Salvation Army material (section 8.2.3)
- the limited amount of material directly relevant to the concept of influential levers (section 8.2.4) as opposed to the individual levers.

#### ***8.2.2 Topics of potential relevance to the research***

The research focused around eleven influential levers. Except for prayer, and packaged programmes and concepts, each is a recognized and significant management topic, with

a wide literature of academic and practical material; most could be sub-divided into sub-topics, each with a significant literature.

Prayer is not a management topic, but has its own theological literature. Packaged programmes and concepts reflects a wide variety of approaches, many represented in the practical, if not the academic, literature.

In addition to influential levers, the research addresses key areas such as measuring results; mission, vision and values; and aligning local outcomes with the central mission. Again, each of these enjoys its own literature.

With so many variables addressed, the extent of literature research directly germane to the research is limited, especially because the essence of the research is not the examination of such individual topics, but the evidence of their practical utility in attaining the Territory's mission; this, itself, is assessed partially from quantitative data, but principally from practitioners' views – the officers and managers of the Territory, and the local individuals who have responded.

### ***8.2.3 Directly relevant Salvation Army material***

Little of the Salvation Army literature relates to management or administration, except tangentially.

Published academic material on the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom is particularly sparse, although as described in Chapters 3 and 4, Escott (1996) and Pallant (2007) have both made contributions useful to this research.

### ***8.2.4 Material directly relevant to the concept of influential levers***

As explained in Chapter 3, the concept of influential levers is novel, overlapping with management control, though the latter term implies an element of negativity. Some



other concepts in the literature also show relevance to influential levers, including De Wit and Meyer's (2005) levers of leadership influence, Grant's (2010) mechanisms for enhancing goal alignment, Simons's (1995) control levers, and Patel's (2005) levers in control situations – though the element of control rather than development or encouragement seems insidious in most of the literature, one exception being Grossman and Rangan's (2001) strategic levers.

#### **8.2.5 *Material relevant to measurement***

Comments from the interviews reinforced the views of Pattison & Woodward (2000), that measurement in a church must be contingent to its particular needs, and suggest that quantification can only be part of that.

#### **8.2.6 *Material relevant to a spiritual climate***

The term “spiritual climate” was used by only one respondent, but cogently summarizes a requirement that was more widely visible in the research. The literature also supports this concept. For example, Brinckerhoff (1999) includes a section on retaining core spiritual values. The adjective “spiritual” is not restricted to religious concepts; Zohar (2006) suggests (p.42) a corporate or private need, inter alia, for meaning and values. But the concept has a particular resonance for churches.

Jackson (2004) examined the role of spirituality in Salvation Army theological training in the USA, with recommendations for increased emphasis upon it; and Peacock (2005) – who in 2002 became the President of the theological college featured in Jackson's research – also emphasized spiritual leadership, as well as intellectual and practical.

#### **8.2.7 *Material relevant to operational models***

The research revealed the importance, but also the greatly increased heterogeneity, of

the operational models (essentially equivalent to “business models”) used by the Territory for its activities in corps.

The literature on business models is relatively novel – Casadesus-Masanell and Ricart (2010) suggest that its origins lie with Drucker. Teece (2010) suggests (p.175) that “The concept of a business model lacks theoretical grounding in economics or in business studies.” His analysis focuses on businesses, but the concept appears capable – with terminological adjustment – of being extended to the Territory. Teece also mentions the need for risk to be assessed, and the likelihood that any such model will eventually require modification or termination. Similarly, Doz and Kosonen (2010) suggest (p.370) that “many companies fail, not because they do something wrong or mediocre, but because they keep doing what used to be the right thing for too long, and fall victim to the rigidity of their business model”.

Casadesus-Masanell and Ricart (2010) distinguish between strategy, business model and tactics, again in a competitive environment, but importantly stress two aspects of such models (p.200-201):

“First, note that our approach implies that *every* organization has a business model. This is because every organization makes *some* choices, and these choices have some consequences . . . [Authors’ italics]

“Second, according to our conceptualization, an organization’s business model is an objective (real) entity; choices are made in every organization, all of which will have consequences.”

In their view, strategy is a decision on which business model, of those possible, should be adopted; and tactics follow. This corresponds with the view from the current research that the Territory has implicitly established its strategy, partly by increasingly accepting local variations to an operational model which previously varied to some degree with local scale and decision, but which was essentially homogenous.

McGrath (2010) argues that business model analysis provides a dynamic approach which she suggests is not fundamental to the two accepted strategic concepts of industry positioning or resource-based capability. She also suggests four distinctive benefits from the business model concept:

- An external, rather than an internal, focus
- Experimentation
- Dynamism, to help identify weak models and seek fresh ones
- Recognition that strategy is (p.249) “quite frequently discovery driven rather than planning oriented”.

A further contribution comes from Chesbrough (2010). He reviews barriers identified in previous research, such as (p.354) “conflicts with existing assets and business models”, but suggests that it may not even be easy to identify the appropriate business model, hence the importance of experimentation, including (using Sarasvathy’s term, p.360) the process of “effectuation” – action rather than analysis (which inadequate data may render impracticable). He also stresses that organizational processes must change with the business model.

Doz and Kosonen (2010) suggest three meta-capabilities to help promote agility – strategic sensitivity, leadership unity and resource fluidity.

The Territory’s apparent implicit strategy of increasing attendances as a long-term step to increasing membership is well illustrated by Yuill (2003) (with Salvation Army experience, but addressing churches generally) who describes the move away from the old paradigm of successively believe-behave-belong to (p.19) “We must allow people to belong, and in so doing, they will begin to believe and behave.”

Finally, if one considers the degree of local autonomy, Oster (2006) suggests that a major determinant of willingness to volunteer is the individual’s perception of their influence over local outputs, and that (p.90): “This local influence by volunteers is very difficult in an organization with strong central control.”

### **8.3 Strategic management and strategic planning**

Results from the research suggested three main themes about strategic management and strategic planning. First, little belief was seen that a clear strategy in the Territory exists; secondly, the mission statement was familiar (certainly at the more senior levels) and seen as a practical guideline for direction as well as a test of results; thirdly, although strategies existed for social services, strategy in relation to corps was in practice – and apparently designedly – being developed at a local level to meet diverse local needs.

One potential implication of these themes, not explicitly put forward by respondents, was the possibility that increasingly diverse local strategy might weaken the strong Salvation Army brand, the value of which was assessed in 2006 by a consultancy Intangible Business at £113 million (the fourth most valuable charity brand in the UK) (The Salvation Army (2007)), and the importance of which was stressed (in a United States context) by Watson & Brown (2001).

It was therefore felt that further recourse to the literature might throw additional light on some of these aspects.

Eisenhardt and Sull (2001) address how competitive advantage may be obtained in fast changing markets. Competitive advantage is not directly applicable to the Territory, which also has little resemblance to the companies cited; moreover, although the environment in which the Territory operates is changing in terms of personal attitudes, demographic developments, social impacts and so on, the rate of change may be regarded as steady rather than fast. However, the Territory operates in a diverse environment, and the principle outlined in the article provides a useful analogy. The authors suggest that the secret of their exemplars lies in pragmatic and entrepreneurial decisions, but guided by (p.98) “a few key strategic processes and a few simple rules to guide them through the chaos.”

The research suggests that the Territory is following a strategy (perhaps implicitly) that has much in common with the objectives of such an approach, though the data obtained did not reveal whether “simple rules” were explicitly set. Certainly the doubts expressed in the interviews resonate with Eisenhardt and Sull’s (2001) comment (p.99) that “Companies that rely on strategy as simple rules are often accused of lacking strategies altogether.” The article suggests areas where rules may be needed, for example on boundaries. Interestingly, respondents in the current research who commented on the diversity of approach mostly welcomed it; there was little concern at the dangers of any lack of clear boundaries.

Gadiesh and Gilbert (2001) examine how appropriate consistency can be brought to an organization seeking an degree of devolved decision making, and adopt the concept of a strategic principle, which they define (p.155) as “a memorable and actionable phrase that distills a company’s corporate strategy into its unique essence and communicates it throughout the organization.” Usefully, they go on to distinguish the concept of strategic principle from that of a mission statement, seeing them as different mechanisms for communicating different concepts (p.157):

“A mission statement informs a company’s *culture*. A strategic principle drives a company’s *strategy*. A mission statement is *aspirational*; it gives people something to strive for. A strategic principle is *action oriented*: it enables people to do something now. A mission statement is meant to *inspire* frontline workers. A strategic principle enables them to *act* quickly by giving them explicit guidance to make strategically consistent choices.” [Authors’ italics].

A natural concern must be how far it is practicable to distil such an important direction-setting tool into (p.155) “a memorable and actionable phrase”, although the authors address this challenge. However, since the current research suggests that the mission statement of the Territory is widely known and respected, it seems that a strategic principle is one option to help resolve the perceived strategic uncertainty. A more radical and fuller approach might be a reinstitution of the Strategic Framework

(abandoned in the Territory in recent years) or an equivalent, to clarify direction, the degree of freedom allowed, and boundaries.

However, a warning might be taken from Miller (2002); having portrayed the strategies of religious organizations as (p.446) “dynamic responses to conflicting pressures for traditionality and innovation”, he comments (p.452) that “Traditionality appears to play a much greater role in the competitive advantages of religious organizations than is typically granted in the strategic management literature.”

#### **8.4 Mission, vision and values**

The research suggests that the Territory’s mission statement in particular is well known – certainly amongst interviewees – and that it is highly respected, though it is unclear how far its three elements are actually used to decide between courses of action or to assess priorities, not least because there is no clear prioritisation amongst them. Interestingly, vision and values were less well known and less seen as drivers of decisions than mission.

Minkoff and Powell’s (2006) view of mission as a barometer for testing alternative strategies seems to be well borne out in the Territory, where an overall formal strategy (as opposed to the “strategic mission priority”) if it exists is not widely known, and the mission statement seems to act as a surrogate. The dangers of relying on mission to the exclusion of strategy are evident, however, from Gadiesh and Gilbert (2001) and from Rumelt (2011).

#### **8.5 Theory formulation**

Neither a basic nor a formal theory was set during the bulk of the research, given its exploratory and inductive nature; instead, a more grounded approach was used. Influential levers were provisionally identified, as a basis for beginning the research. As the analysis developed it became possible to formulate a theory on the following lines:

Influential levers are a necessary but insufficient element of achieving mission success in the Territory. Increasing attention is being paid to management and administrative practices that are necessary in any organization, and the general view of respondents is that performance in these is variable, though in some respects improving. Respondents are attempting, with difficulty, to reconcile the need for such levers with the need for primacy of the religious purpose.

There is widespread lack of confidence that respondents know the Territory's strategy; and the mission statement (which is widely known and respected) may be being relied upon as an inadequate substitute for this.

The Territory has a unique cultural and historical background that provides high commitment but risks providing role ambiguity and inhibiting cohesive change. Ironically, the need to change is recognized and responded to in many ways, but the culture and structure mean that this may happen in a disorganized way, with longer-term organizational risks. Leadership, at every level in the organization, is widely seen as a critical factor.

The pre-requisite for missional success in the Territory is the maintenance and development of the appropriate spiritual climate and commitment to the mission. This must continue to shape the place and form of the influential levers.

## **8.6 Conclusions**

This Chapter has used the results of the research to reassess the contribution of the literature to addressing the research question, research aims, research objectives, and their implications.

It has also provided a theory based on the results of the research, which is an important background to Chapters 9 and 10.

## **CHAPTER 9 – DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This Chapter builds on Chapters 7 and 8 to discuss the outcome and implications of the research.

It is important to note the positive spirit, the strong belief in the Salvation Army and its mission, and the personal commitment encountered throughout the interviews and the questionnaires, as evidenced in Chapter 7. Those concerns and other comments recorded should be seen against this background.

### **9.2 Analysis of the research results**

#### ***9.2.1 Introduction***

This Chapter identifies and discusses key themes emerging from the research. Its formal conclusions are dealt with in Chapter 10.

#### ***9.2.2 Mission success and its measurement***

Most respondents accepted the concept of mission success, but not all – one commented that “The Bible calls us to be faithful, it doesn’t necessarily call us to be successful.”

This raises the fundamental issue of how the Territory should respond to a lack of progress in achieving its mission, whether locally or overall. Should it simply be accepted as God’s will? Should a corps be kept open on this basis? Is it an appropriate way to use limited resources?

Though the dangers of relying on history are real, the Salvation Army’s founder, William Booth, was impatient with any lack of progress, commenting (Sandall & others



(1947-2000), Vol. 1 p.190) “I should conclude I was out of my place if I spent twelve months at a place and did not leave it tangibly, unmistakably, visibly better than I found it.” Railton – one of the most significant of Booth’s leadership team – stated (Sandall & others (1947-2000), Vol. 1 p.220): “We have abandoned several small stations in order to use up all our strength on those we can make something of.” Comments from respondents suggested that there may be more reluctance to take such decisions nowadays, although it happens.

An important aspect of mission success is how, and how far, it can be measured. The overall view of respondents was that measurements and statistics were important and should be maintained, but that in the Territory’s context they should be used with particular care; and that personal judgment is at least as important a factor. The limited evidence from the research suggests that there may be a degree of correlation in judgments of a current situation, but that, as one might intuitively expect, retrospective or prospective judgments are more likely to diverge.

One interview respondent commented that a judgment on mission success was best formed by “affirmation” – the views of a variety of individuals in contact with the situation, coupled with the use of whatever tools are available and appropriate. This reflects the concept of evaluation, as described by Pattison & Woodward (2000). In the context of evaluating the Territory’s mission, the conclusion must be that constructs such as the three strands of its mission need to be evaluated, and personal judgment (with as wide a range of informed views as is practicable) is an important part of this. But numerical measurement, despite its disadvantages and its particular practical difficulties, remains important within that evaluation.

### ***9.2.3 Membership and attendances***

Neither membership numbers nor attendances represent, in themselves, mission success. But both are important as surrogate measures of, and as facilitators to, success, with any shortfalls being potential barriers. Against this background, the sample evidence from

both categories of data must be a cause for concern. Some of the smaller corps sampled apparently show creditable results, but as Table 7.8 shows, the 2005 – 2010 net growth in smaller corps in the sample was outweighed almost 9 times by the net decline in medium and larger corps.

A key strategy both for increasing membership numbers and for directly addressing mission appears to be to bring non-members into the Salvation Army community by providing social, community and even sporting activities. Yet total attendances fell by 13% in 2005 – 2010, indicating that an attendance strategy is far from compensating for the membership decline.

This is a long-standing and difficult problem, faced by many (though not all) churches. It may represent the most serious barrier to a long-term strategy and to long-term mission success in the Territory. The numerical decline in membership numbers in the Territory over several decades continues, and as Escott (1996) suggests, if not reversed could ultimately prove terminal.

This leads to consideration of the concept of an organizational life cycle. Various versions exist of design for this, though common features include stages which may be summarized as birth, growth, maturity and decline. In some parts of the world (and in overall numbers) the Salvation Army is growing, but the Territory is in a different position. As explained already, its growth phase (certainly when measured by membership numbers) is long over, and the debate is more likely to be whether it is in a late stage of maturity, or indeed in decline. The evidence is perhaps stronger for decline.

In either case, the position is not yet terminal, however. There is no specific “right size”, and other organizations have managed to renew themselves by a shift from maturity or perhaps even decline into a new cycle. The challenge may be to achieve that whilst the Territory still has the critical mass to do so.

#### ***9.2.4 Strategy and operational models***

Strategy did not appear as a specific topic in the questionnaires, as it was not expected to be a topic which leaders at corps and centre level would regard as particularly apposite, though the existence, development and nature of plans was covered. However, strategy proved a powerful and controversial topic in the Divisional interviews.

The predominant view in the interviews seemed to be to be:

- Strategy is very important
- We should have a clear strategy
- We do not have a clear one, or if we do we are not sure what it is.

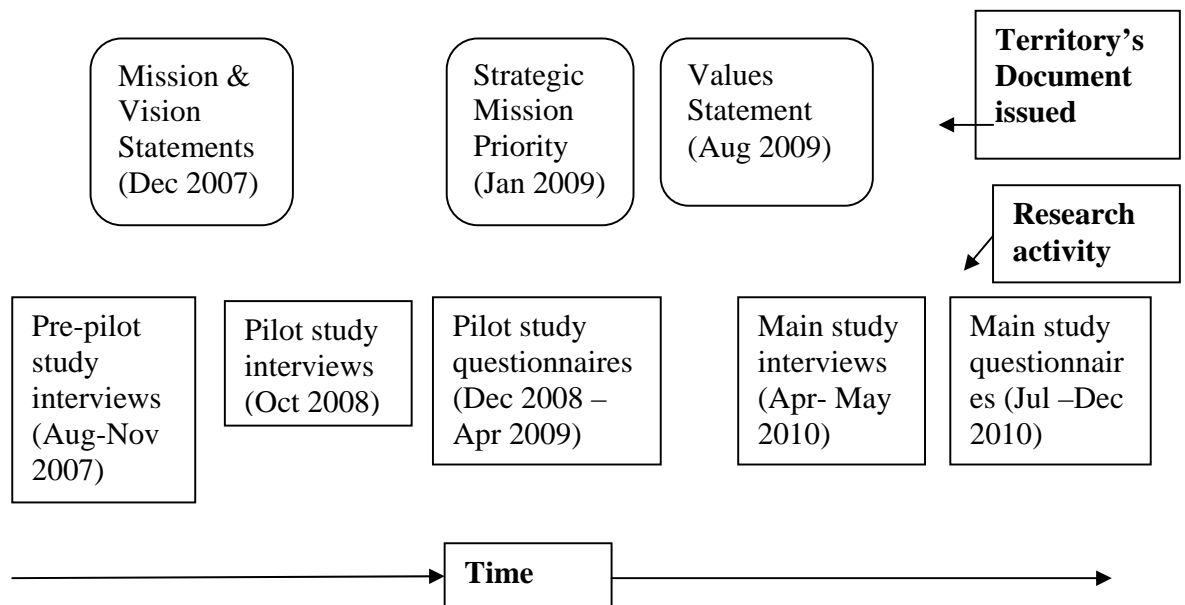
This was despite the fact that the outputs of the Territory's Administrative Review (featuring mission, vision and value statements and a strategic mission priority) were progressively published in the weekly magazine *Salvationist* over a period overlapping with some parts of the research, as shown in Figure 8.1.

Alongside the concerns about the possible absence of a Territorial strategy, was a widespread, strong, and apparently thoughtful, view by respondents that there should not be a specific strategy at Territorial level anyway, but discrete strategies at corps level to reflect local needs.

From the research, the strategy actually operated by the Territory in respect of corps appears (whilst not, apparently, publicly articulated) to have four main strands:

- Commitment to encouraging local decisions on local strategy (without necessarily using this term)
- An emphasis on discipleship (as explained in Section 9.2.5 below), as a means of personal spirituality and development
- An acceptance, possibly even an encouragement, of local diversity of worship style and other activities

- Encouraging every type of acceptable attendance, with the aim of progressively developing this into increased involvement and the development of spirituality.



**Figure 9.1 Time frame for *Salvationist* announcements and issue of research instruments**

It is arguable that what is actually seen at corps level is less a local strategy than a local operational model, but, either way, this approach has strong possibilities in addressing the challenges in the Territory; and the evidence of operational diversity suggests that the local approach is not only approved, but also reflects what is happening in practice. Both the current research and that of Pallant (2007) suggest that Divisional Commanders have considerable discretion, and the questionnaire evidence demonstrates the variety of operational models actually seen.

Yuill (2003) uses a particular example of establishing a locally-contingent church in Manchester to assert that (p.21):

“This example has taught me an enormous lesson regarding the way denominations and denominational leaders must work. Some might say that we

have lost control and, in one sense, they would be correct. But rather than control, we evaluate the effectiveness of the program, hold the team accountable for their ministry, and celebrate the uniqueness of the model. Whatever authority I have over the project derives not primarily from my position, but from the quality of my relationships with the team and the quantity of the resources we devote to the ministry.”

Such a devolved operational model has significant implications, some potentially adverse. Miller (2002) suggests that for religious organizations traditionality may be a more powerful element in the traditionality/innovation challenge than it is in the wider strategic management context.

Although the research provided a limited amount of evidence of consequent problems it did not provide sufficient information to judge their extent, nor whether these have been recognized and evaluated, to ensure that locally-devolved operational models are part of a conscious benefits-risk balanced strategy. For example, an increasingly diverse approach to modes of worship, to uniform-wearing, and to activities may mean:

- The cohesion of the Salvation Army brand, important for fund-raising and in attracting and retaining both formal membership and informal support may be weakened
- Leadership demands on officers may be increased by transferring them to corps whose operational model (whether in worship or in other activities) is one for which they may lack affinity, experience, specific training, or a combination of these (one leader commented specifically on being in a situation of this kind, whilst emphasizing that this did not mean reduced commitment). Such an issue is an additional challenge to the long-recognized challenges of diversity of corps in terms of size, demographics and similar factors
- Benefits from reducing barriers and responding to demographic changes and local preferences may be offset by the risk of attrition from those with more traditional preferences

- Local choices may be implemented which are unacceptable to the Territory (one respondent quoted a specific case, which was however eventually corrected)
- Significant policy changes might be appropriate over time; for example, for most of the Salvation Army's existence it has preferred to own its own buildings; this does not always happen, however, and still greater flexibility might become an advantage .

Evidence clearly suggests therefore that, whether or not a formal strategy for the Territory, greatly increased diversity has become the practice, and may be irreversible; most respondents appeared as a minimum to regard this as inevitable, and generally to regard it as a positive factor.

However, if this is, or should be, the strategy, it may need to be more clearly established, published, and supported by management processes – including ensuring that leaders understand their responsibilities, helping them to establish clear local strategies, and providing tailored training and additional support.

This discussion leads back to the former Strategic Framework, which encouraged corps and other parts of the Territory to create local strategic plans within a defined Territorial framework. The general view of interview respondents was to confirm that this initiative had died, but without understanding why, or what if anything had replaced it; its decline seemed to be regretted. A renewed version of the Strategic Framework might provide a way of managing the risks of a policy of devolved strategy in a more effective way than the looser understanding that appears to exist now. It could certainly meet the perceived need of interview respondents for a clearer understanding of strategy in the Territory.

### ***9.2.5 Discipleship***

The Territory has set a “strategic mission priority” – to “prioritise making disciples – growing saints” (Matear (2009)). This might imply that this element of the Territory's

mission statement has predominance over the other two – of saving souls and serving suffering humanity – but in the same article Matear, the Territorial Commander, sets out either two or three objectives for each of the three elements, with the implication that a focus on growing saints will enhance the attainment of all three elements. One possible danger is that this priority could encourage excessive focus on the most inward-looking of the three elements of the mission statement, increasing the excessively inward-looking attitude of some corps (which was raised by interview respondents).

“Discipleship” arose on a number of occasions during the interviews. As suggested above, it resonates well with all three elements of the mission statement, suggesting the concept of a “spiritual journey” (also referred to in the interviews).

This raises the question of how such a concept should best be used – partly depending on exactly what this “strategic mission priority” is, or is meant to do. It is not the same as a strategy; and to see it as an objective might rate it too low, particularly as subsidiary objectives were set out by Matear. In some ways it might be seen as a critical success factor, perhaps one of the most important ones possible, leading followers in the direction of achieving the mission. It links well with the concept of a spiritual climate, which emerged from the research.

The interview research showed that discipleship had attained resonance, as desired, but it was not clear whether people understood how it should be used or how it fits into direction-setting. It may be that it is recognized as key, but that its strategic role is not yet clearly established or understood.

#### ***9.2.6 History, culture and change***

The Territory has a unique cultural and historical background that at its best provides high commitment, but historically had a low propensity to change. In recent years there have been significant efforts both in the Salvation Army overall and in the Territory to decide upon and implement appropriate change, without prejudicing the mission or the

organization's essential ethos. Many such changes have taken place, but complexities of culture and structure have meant that the effects may not have always been fully foreseen, so that new problems have arisen in the process. Thus although the hierarchical nature has been partially reduced, the current research suggests that accountability is seen as relatively low (evidenced both by the questionnaires and the interviews), and that role ambiguity exists, as do conflicts between the implications of officer and non-officer status.

Additionally, a concern about the pace of change and its continuous nature was evident. It was not possible to assess whether the degree of change seen in the Territory was unnecessary or unmanageable – although the researcher's impression is that most of what has been happening is necessary, and in some ways overdue; and that continued change will be necessary. If this is correct, it may suggest a need for more effective change management practice.

### ***9.2.7 Influential levers***

These were the prime focus of the research project.

The overall views of respondents might be expressed by using the familiar concepts of Herzberg as an analogy (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman (1993)). In looking at employee motivation, he compared "hygiene" and "motivation" factors – the former being necessary to avoid dissatisfaction, but only the latter providing positive satisfaction.

Using this analogy, most of the influential levers would be seen by respondents as the equivalent of hygiene factors; they are not the drivers leading respondents to become officers, employees, soldiers or adherents, but in a large organization are necessary. Some of the levers (especially leadership) are more than this – they are seen as capable of making a real difference to the chances of achieving mission success; extending the analogy, they might even be called health factors. One lever would seem to be regarded as even more significant – in a final extension of the analogy, perhaps seen as a life-



giving factor; prayer was generally well-rated as a lever, but with hindsight from the results of the research, the researcher would have adopted instead a lever of “spiritual climate”, as suggested by one respondent. This is a valid attribute within the concept of influential levers, since it is clearly capable of influence by those with responsibilities at each level in the organization.

It is also important to note that the concept of influential levers is based on their significance in supporting mission success. This requires a clearly articulated mission, and its translation into results through strategy and operational models. Figure 9.2 has been designed by the researcher to set out these themes in the form of a model for mission success. Although its practical application will be contingent on the situation and organizational level, conceptually the model is intended to be applicable at all organizational levels. Supported throughout by the necessary spiritual climate, mission is a starting point which dominates both leadership and strategy. These factors together lead to the operational model, and dominate the exercise of the remaining influential levers; and the outcomes of these constitute the mission results.

At first sight this may look intuitive, but it reveals key messages supported by the research data:

- The fundamental importance of the spiritual climate
- The particular significance of leadership
- The need for a clear strategy
- The significance of the operational model
- The role of the other influential levers in facilitating mission success by
  - o executing the strategy . . .
  - o . . . through the operational model . . .
  - o . . . under the guidance of leadership . . .
  - o . . . in an appropriate spiritual climate.

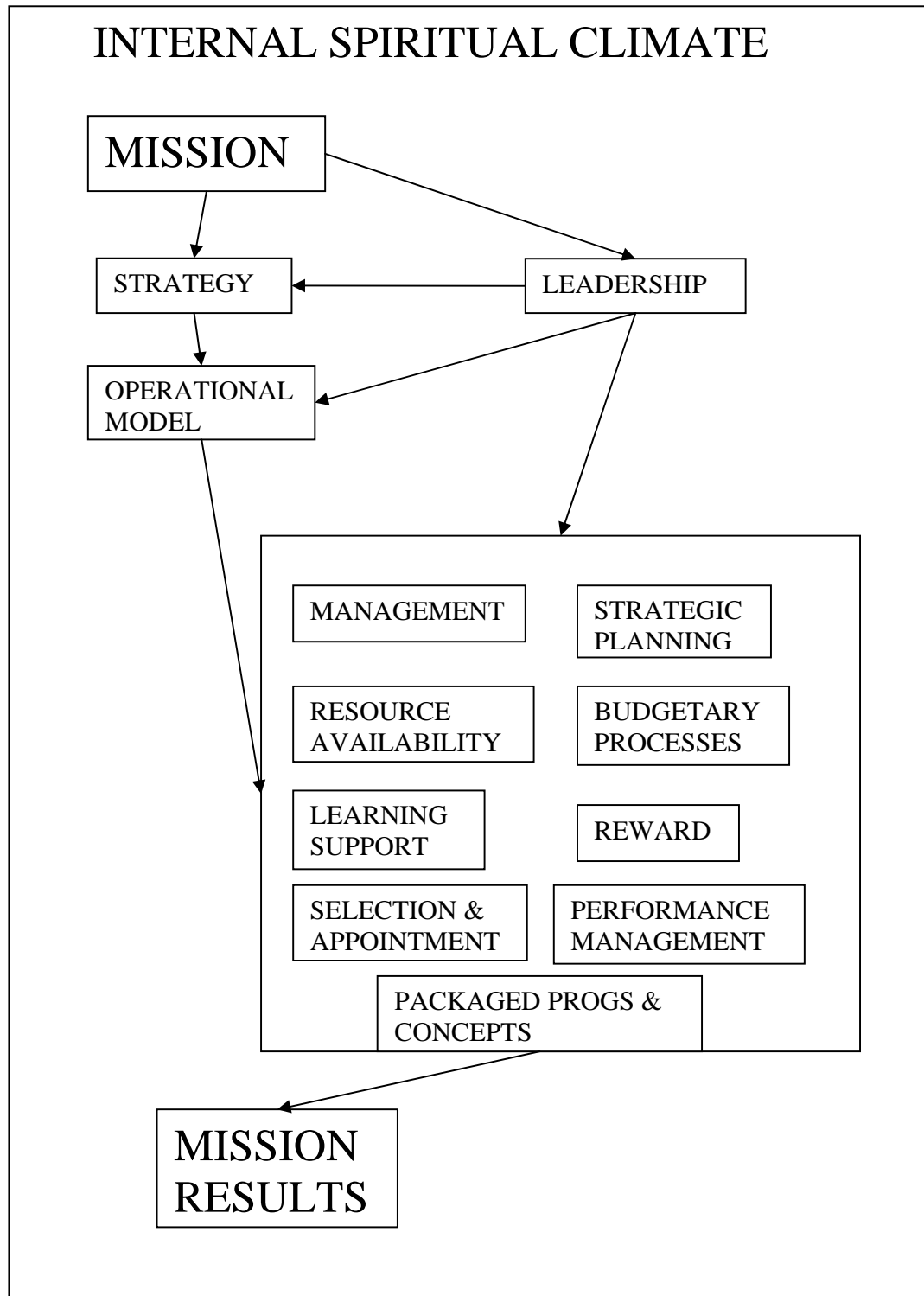
(Throughout this thesis, the term “spiritual climate” refers to the organization internally and its component parts and individuals; the external spiritual climate will always remain an exogenous challenge, to address which is a key part of the mission.)

The term “management” has more than one meaning within this research. As a discrete influential lever it has been interpreted to consist of those aspects of organizational administration (such as communication or health and safety) that do not fall within the more specific influential levers. In its more conventional sense, it includes all the influential levers except prayer (or spiritual climate), and thus embraces all nine elements within the central box of Figure 9.2, as well as (arguably) leadership. In this sense an additional proviso is appropriate.

As suggested in the theory expressed in Chapter 8, influential levers are a necessary but insufficient element of achieving mission success. Management in its widest sense has received significant attention in the Territory, though views on it in this research were mixed, and more supportive of recent improvements than of the current level of its efficacy. Serious attention seems to be being given to its demands, though the results may still be patchy; but there remains suspicion that it may be regarded as an end rather than as a means to the desired ends, and there are concerns (as voiced by Pallant (2007)) that management language and attitudes may undermine the religious purpose.

This concern is understandable, but Pattison (2000) presents four reasons for management’s importance to churches – its practical necessity, its presence in religious history, the importance of corporate forms of religious experience, and the dangers of ignoring such a pervasive world social concept. Another valid concern is the evidence of this research that front-line practitioners feel that the management practices they need are often less effective than they need to be to fulfil the Territory’s mission.

For example, the fact that pastoral care is not always easy to reconcile with line management authority is a source of conflict and tension that needs to be resolved as far as possible, respecting the organization’s purpose and culture; but any fact that some individuals do not receive the appraisals they are entitled to under the church’s internal rules is a management failing in a church, as it would be in any other organization.



**Figure 9.2 Model for mission success in the Territory**

The Territory, like the Salvation Army overall, has a remarkable history and public image. It has highly committed officers, employees, soldiers, adherents, attendees and friends. It opens its doors as an evangelical church to members and non-members alike, it provides a wide and deep spectrum of social services, some entirely from its own resources, but also under contract to local authorities. It receives widespread public support – financial, practical and political. It has a well-conceived and well-understood mission statement; and to serve its mission it requires leadership, management, and administrative practices that genuinely are subordinate to its mission but effectively support and enable its achievement.

## **CHAPTER 10 – CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

### **10.1 Introduction**

The key strategic and operational outcomes of the research are shown as part of the discussion in Chapter 9. This Chapter records modifications to the original research topic, outlines conclusions on the outcome of the research against its original expectations, considers issues arising from the relationship between literature findings and field research findings from the current study, examines the contribution of the research to the literature, and offers suggestions for further research.

### **10.2. Modifications to the original research topic**

The original research topic, as outlined in the research proposal, was:

“A study of the influential levers used by the Salvation Army in the United Kingdom to secure local centre outcomes in conurbations consistent with the Territory’s overall mission and objectives.”

As the research proceeded, it became clear that the focus on conurbations would not be practicable, and might indeed be limiting and sub-optimal. The most decisive contributing factor was the challenge in finding Divisional Commanders willing to participate, and the practical need to look at their Divisions to establish a “best fit” of their corps and centres with the needs of the research.

However, it also appeared that most conurbations lacked sufficient numbers of corps and centres to provide a reasonably broad sample, given prospective response rates; and within those Divisions that undertook to participate the most appropriate course proved to be sampling broad geographic groupings rather than discrete conurbations.

However, reasons emerged during the research suggesting that the changed emphasis may have been useful as well as inevitable:

1. Not all conurbations (the concept itself depends on definition and judgment) are likely to involve as many as even five or six corps or centres, and experience shows that only a minority of leaders invited will respond. It would be hard to understand the dynamics of a conurbation if only one or two out of (say) four or more units actually participated.
2. Even four or five conurbations would not be enough to gain a real picture of the dynamics, so it is doubtful that within the current project a large enough sample would have been possible.
3. Except for early consideration in Territorial Headquarters, the subject of conurbations was virtually absent from comments in interviews, even though the researcher frequently mentioned them as an original factor in the research. This may suggest that other factors are seen as more important in supporting mission success.

It seemed to the researcher, however, that planning and coordination within conurbations merit specific research at some stage, but this could better be done beyond the current research, and would require a different methodology. This possibility is carried forward into Section 10.5.1.

## **10.3 Theory development**

### ***10.3.1 Research theory, question, aims and objectives***

No formal research theory was used for this research topic, but a research question, research aims and research objectives were set out in Chapter 1, and a research theory was established in Chapter 8.

### ***10.3.2. Development of research question, aims and objectives***

As explained in Section 10.2, the research revealed that it was impossible within the scope and samples to make specific assessments on conurbations. However, it was not thought appropriate to rewrite the research question, aims and objectives, the essence of which was still achievable

### ***10.3.3 Achievement of research question, aims and objectives***

The extent of attainment of the research aims and objectives may most usefully be addressed by looking initially at each objective separately.

1. To identify and examine relevant influential levers

This was successfully achieved. The initial draft list of levers proved robust as the research progressed, though with some changes.

- Resource allocation was replaced by resource availability, to stress the difference from budgetary processes
- Concept products was renamed packaged programmes in an attempt to clarify its meaning, then further renamed packaged programmes and concepts, since some of the items examined might have a wider impact than that of products
- Prayer was added, though late in the research it became apparent that it might even better have been addressed as one element in a spiritual climate.

Apart from these changes, the draft list of levers remained unchanged, and it must be said that the general lack of challenge from interviewees on the content of the list was a disappointment, though the limited time in the interview schedule may have been a factor. The overlaps and divisions between leadership and management inevitably remained, and the researcher was conscious that some elements of management – in particular, communication – might have been better treated as separate levers. However, the dangers of extending the list of levers were recognized, especially given

limited interview time and questionnaire length. Moreover, interview discussion inevitably touched on such issues, and it was possible in the leaders' questionnaires to introduce more specific topics such as communication, trust and accountability.

Overall, the amended list of influential levers proved a workable tool for the research, and demonstrated itself relevant to the Territory's needs.

2. To assess how far the use of such levers is effective in attaining results in accordance with the Territorial mission

The research succeeded in obtaining subjective views from both interview and questionnaire respondents on the importance of individual levers in achieving mission results, and the degree of effectiveness in using such levers, although it was difficult to provoke prioritisation of the levers, or significant differences between them in terms of importance and achievement.

It was not possible to assess quantitatively the impact of individual levers, partly because of their inherent combination in practice, and partly because of the difficulties in measuring success. This was expected.

3. To assess how far the use of such levers is effective in responding successfully to external factors that may impact upon local outcomes.

Respondents' overall views were obtained through both interviews and questionnaires, and the impact of changing external factors was quantitatively assessed in the leaders' questionnaires and in the mission success matrices. Specific segregation of this variable could not be rigorous, however, within the practical limitations of this research.

Looking critically at the degree to which the research aims were achieved, the first was successfully addressed overall, and the second was addressed so far as could be expected. The third was more equivocal – in some ways it proved to be a subset of the



second aim, but could not practicably be separately addressed within the limits of the research, although it was established that the impact of local external factors was seen as having increased over the previous five years.

Overall, the achievements of the research objectives are seen as having effectively attained the research aims.

#### **10.4 Issues raised by the relationship between the literature review and the field research**

##### ***10.4.1 Purpose of this Section***

This Section draws on the literature review in Chapter 3, and particularly on the literature review synthesis in Section 3.10. It examines the most significant findings from that material in relation to the key findings from the field research which the literature review has illuminated. Consequently, this analysis builds not only on Chapter 3, but also on the field research results described in Chapter 7.

The results of this analysis are seen as important contributions to the practical usability of this research study.

##### ***10.4.2 Influential levers – the concept***

The concept and list of influential levers was outlined to, and discussed with, interview respondents, and the views were consistently expressed that all were important and relevant. The only suggestions for additional levers were the addition of prayer (which addition was widely supported), and later for the extension of this lever to one of spiritual climate; the researcher supported and adopted these changes.

Thus the evidence of the field research showed the concept to be valid, and the list of levers to be workable, although the list may be contingent to the Territory, and further refinement might be possible with additional studies.

#### ***10.4.3 Culture***

Culture is shown by the literature summarized in Section 3.5 to be a vital influence on an organization, and its implications include an important impact on both leadership and followership.

As subsection 3.10.3 mentions, Schein (1990) suggests the tendency over time for initial values to become assumptions; this can make them particularly difficult to challenge (whether for good or ill). Whilst not a specific subject of this research, Salvation Army history reveals many examples, particularly since values and assumptions can translate into regulations and therefore into potentially disciplinary areas. Some have changed over time – for example, attendance at football matches or cinemas are no longer disciplinary matters. The current application of such a test in the Salvation Army generally or in the Territory specifically to particular cases is a matter of debate, however; some might regard the ban on any form of gambling or on the use of alcohol as falling into the values-become-assumptions category, whereas others – including Salvation Army and Territorial leadership – would no doubt argue that fully adequate reasons for these positions still exist. In subsection 3.9.1, Clifton (1999) and Larsson (1988) illustrate that despite the need for consistency in key areas, global policies can come under increasing pressure, and that no easy solutions may be available.

#### ***10.4.4 Mission, vision, and values***

As summarised in subsection 3.10.4, the literature is supportive of these concepts, whilst stressing the need for their appropriate use. All three have been adopted and promulgated in the Territory.

The field research showed mixed results, however. As shown in Table 7.1, most of the units responding to this topic in questionnaires used mission statements, but fewer used vision statements (whether their own or the Territory's), and barely half used values statements. Interview respondents (as shown in subsection 7.11.3) were generally well aware of and supportive of the mission statement, and expressed support for the other statements, though they appeared less well-known or well-used.

There was also evidence from the interviews of a tendency amongst some to use the mission statement as a surrogate for strategy, since the former was well-known and the latter appeared not to be.

#### ***10.4.5 Setting goals and measurement***

Subsection 3.10.5 summarized the dilemma faced by churches in the use of these concepts. The interviews in the field research fully confirmed the expected diversity of views. The need to maintain statistics was accepted, but the concept of measuring mission success – whatever the surrogate measures used – was not universally approved. There was widespread agreement that when measuring, statistics alone were insufficient, and a measure of human judgment was also necessary, appropriate, and capable of being valid. This was seen as particularly true when part of a range of evaluative approaches was used, and when based on the judgment of more than one individual.

#### ***10.4.6 Strategy, strategic planning, strategic focus and the third sector***

As explained in subsection 3.10.6, the literature stresses the importance of strategy and the dangers of a loss of strategic focus. It is axiomatic that if the strategy is unclear, focus is impossible. In some ways the third sector presents additional challenges in strategic terms, because mission, stakeholders and measurement are often less clearly definable.

The field research, summarized in Section 8.3 and in subsection 9.2.4, showed significant concern about a perceived lack of strategy, or at least a lack of clear knowledge of the strategy. This is in spite of – or, possibly, even partially a result of – the volume of initiatives recent the years, including restatements of mission, vision and values, and the creation of a strategic mission priority. There was also concern about the difference between a need for Territorial or local strategies and the significance of each.

As subsection 9.2.4 suggests, the gap might be partially met in practice by a clearer definition of an acceptable operational model. But the evidence of both the literature review and the field research is that consistency of the operational model has increasingly become neither possible nor (despite the dangers of its absence) on balance desirable. An updated version of the former Strategic Framework may well be the best available solution, capable *inter alia* of securing an appropriate degree of consistency but also of respecting the need for devolution and diversity. It could also clarify in simple terms the linkage between related concepts, including mission, vision, values and key priorities. The field research suggested that there was not clarity, for example, as to whether the strategic priority of discipleship should be regarded as a strategy. A re-introduced Strategic Framework or its equivalent would, however, need a longer effective life than was enjoyed by its initial version.

The need for strategic clarity is particularly relevant in terms of the application of Mintzberg's (1994) taxonomy of organizational forms, described in subsections 3.9.1 and 3.10.6. If the researcher's view in subsection 3.9.1 is correct, that in Mintzberg's terms the Territory remains essentially "a machine organization, with a limited degree of professional, and possibly a developing local adhocracy", it would normally be assumed to be associated with a more formal planning approach than was apparently found in the field research.

Thus strategic planning within the Territory appears to be impeded by the perception of a lack of Territorial strategy, by doubt as to which level or levels have, or should have, strategies, and perhaps by the difficult dichotomy of resolving local and Territorial operational models. As explained in subsection 7.11.3, strategic planning was viewed as important, but not as a strength. It should be recognized, however, that the progressive introduction within the Territory of Natural Church Development is increasingly creating local mission plans, and providing a form of strategic planning.

#### ***10.4.7 Leadership***

Subsection 3.10.7 summarized the importance of leadership, and it is unsurprising that this emerged as a strong priority from the field research.

Subsection 3.9.2 demonstrated the importance of leadership in organizations, both for-profit and non-profit. But its operation in churches – and indeed its degree of accepted legitimacy – is a particular challenge, given that between the same two individuals there may be both a managerial and a pastoral relationship. These will not always be easy to reconcile, particularly when there are performance or disciplinary issues, although the quotation from Lyall (2000) in subsection 3.9.8 shows what an appropriate approach might look like, albeit that this is mentioned in a different context.

The field research showed some of the tensions encountered in leadership and in its related management, for example in a perception of inadequate accountability, and in concerns over whether poor performance was sufficiently addressed. It also showed, however, the attention being given in the Territory to leadership, including the development of the concept of servant leadership, as well as to its supporting management practices. This attention is likely to become increasingly important.

Closely related to this is Mintzberg's distinction (discussed in subsection 3.10.7) between the engaging and the heroic models of management. It seems clear from the field research that the Territory and probably the overwhelming majority of its officers

are aiming at the engaging model, which is also more consistent with doctrinal beliefs; but the transition to this is a challenge that is not always being achieved.

#### ***10.4.8 Strategic human resource management***

The literature demonstrates that, as commented upon in subsection 3.10.8, the strategic use of human resource management is essential for strategic execution; indeed, it may properly be regarded as a key element in strategy formulation. For a church, too, there is the added element of religious as well as moral requirements for appropriate respect for those with whom the church comes into contact.

The field research showed a perception of human resource management in the Territory which may be summarized as viewing it as important, not yet adequate, but improving. A variety of human resource interventions have been undertaken in recent years, and these were generally welcomed, though not always regarded as effectively operating. The field research also suggested that some of the barriers to improved human resource management are upward as well as downward, which provides additional challenges.

The officer resource has become more scarce; the member and attender resources (themselves legitimate and necessary subjects for strategic human resource management) are also falling, as demonstrated in Chapter 7; and despite the Salvation Army's excellent brand and generally high public reputation, donor support may become more challenging in a difficult economic environment. Strategic management of all these elements will therefore be an important priority.

#### ***10.4.9 Founder influence***

Section 3.5, as commented upon in subsection 3.10.9, draws attention to the literature on the influence of the founder of an organization.

The Salvation Army is a particularly interesting case, because although William Booth is rightly recognized as its founder, his wife – Catherine Booth – is also given considerable attention, partly because of her own activities (for example, promoting the concept of women preachers), partly from the literature that she contributed, but also from the strong influence that she exercised on her husband's development and decisions. Nor should the continuity be overlooked from the fact that William Booth's eldest son, Bramwell, succeeded him as General from 1912 until 1929, when according to one school of thought fears of a family dynasty were no less a factor than his continued sickness in his highly contested removal, as described in many sources, particularly in Larsson (2009).

William Booth remains a visible and highly respected influence in the organization, and his name and views emerged on various occasions in the field research. In some ways, his influence is now more subtle, however, and some of the overt signs – observable artefacts, in the terminology of Schein (1990) – have gone.

- Some Salvation Army halls used to display large photographs of William Booth, and sometimes of Catherine Booth too. Whilst examination of this was not included in the field research, the researcher suspects that such a practice would be rare now, if found at all
- Similarly, "Founder's Day" – once a formal reminder, may now be more rarely observed
- The "Founder's Song" – still often referred to by that title, and possibly the most-loved of William Booth's songs – used to enjoy a distinctive No. 1 physical position in the Salvation Army's Song Book, but since the middle of the last century appears instead in the section appropriate to its specific subject matter, with no particular emphasis drawn to it.

In the researcher's view, the influence of the Salvation Army's founder remains evident nowadays in the respect shown to his commitment, his views, and his achievements; in his literature; and in the continued use of his songs. But his most potent and enduring

influence is probably in the doctrines, values and assumptions which still underlie the Salvation Army's beliefs, policies and practices.

### **10.5 Achievements, contribution and limitations of the research**

This research established the concept of influential levers. Although this has similarities with management control and related concepts, its wider remit (discussed in Chapter 3) provides a useful and practical range of management and administrative tools potentially available to the individual at any management or supervisory level.

Whilst the concept is itself important, a major contribution of the research has been the examination of influential levers in this specific organization, partly to develop and validate the concept for wider use, but also to provide useable organizational value to the Territory itself. The views of those interviewed confirm their potential value.

In developing and applying the concept of influential levers, the research succeeded in creating a viable database of quantitative and quantitative data from the Territory at the levels of local participants, local leaders and Divisional leaders. It proved possible from this to establish and confirm a theory (grounded in data from busy, sometimes reluctant, respondents in a distinctive organization), and to draw conclusions which will be passed to the leadership of the Territory, and in which the leadership is already showing interest.

As well as its direct value to the Territory and potential indicative value elsewhere, the research has also added to the body of knowledge. As shown in Chapters 3 and 4, academic literature on management or administrative aspects of the Salvation Army in general, and on the Territory in particular, is sparse; that on churches (a form of nonprofit and charity with distinctive differences from other organizations) is itself limited. Against this background, the current research has contributed to the literature, and has also addressed an important practical issue. None of the influential levers is individually novel, but in combination (and with due linkage to ancillary management issues also dealt with in the research, such as mission, and accountability) they provide



a broad spectrum of tools for leaders at all levels and for the organization as a whole enabling mission success. The concept also provides criteria for assessment of strategic readiness for mission success. Whilst developed in the specific context of the Territory, the concept is considered of wider indicative value, to the Salvation Army in general; to other churches, charities and nonprofits with devolved activities; and potentially to other organizations too.

Additionally, the methodology and instruments developed during the research are likely to be of value to future researchers addressing comparable management concepts, particularly in churches and other nonprofit environments.

Some reservations about the research are recognized. The original concept of using conurbations proved incompatible with practical issues in administering the designed methodology, though this did not prevent a full examination of the relevance of influential levers to implementing the Territory's mission. Securing evaluation in the leaders' questionnaires of individual influential levers would have been useful. Centres, as opposed to corps, could practicably be addressed only to a limited extent. Also, the nature of the research challenge in this particular environment, and of the methodology needed to obtain and compare views at different hierarchical levels, proved such that sampling could not be random; and sample sizes (except for the leaders' questionnaire) proved less than originally envisaged. This limited statistical validity, but nevertheless allowed indicative results. Finally, it proved impracticable to isolate the specific interrelationship between influential levers and external factors.

Overall, the research established and validated the practical concept of influential levers. It also provided an original and practical insight into the relationship between the spiritual mission of a very distinctive church, and its execution through the management processes necessary in any large organization. No identified doctoral-level research has previously focused specifically on the multi-level management challenges of the Territory, but, despite the cultural barriers and the previously identified likelihood of reluctance by individuals to participate, it proved possible to obtain a sufficient volume

and quality of response, providing the basis to support the researcher in creating an original contribution to Salvation Army literature, and to management literature in general, and the implementation of strategy in particular.

## **10.6 Suggestions for further research**

### ***10.6.1 Influential levers***

The concept of influential levers is straightforward. Further research could test it in other contexts, and develop its content and usability as a simple and practical managerial tool

### ***10.6.2 Conurbations***

Although the research originally contemplated examining influential levers in the specific context of conurbations, for the reasons already explained this proved impracticable within the obtainable sample.

Nevertheless, conurbations in the Territory remain a topic of interest and merit specific research, building upon the current work. A different research strategy and methodology appear necessary, although where written plans exist these could provide a starting point; and attendance and membership statistics are also available, though subject to the same caveats as applied in the current research.

### ***10.6.3 Planning***

Considerable local planning takes place in the Territory, and with the spread of Natural Church Development this is likely to grow. It is possible that plans developed in this way may even be more respected than those formulated more loosely.

Within the scope of this research it was not possible to address this topic specifically in any depth, but a potential field for research would be the extent and nature of planning at Territorial, Divisional and local levels; the degree to which planning actually drives or affects operational decisions and actions; the impact of planning on the ability to respond to opportunities or threats; the extent to which planning focuses or dissipates the commitment and contribution of individuals; and the degree to which planning appears to enhance or inhibit mission results.

#### ***10.6.4 Measurement***

Though the topic proved somewhat controversial, the research suggests that a necessity for measurement is accepted in the Territory. Some tools already exist for measuring even spiritual concepts, and research (beyond that possible in the current project, with its wider remit) into measurement of all key aspects of mission success would be useful.

#### ***10.6.5 Use of existing statistical data***

Extensive statistical information is assembled at Territorial Headquarters. Whilst its quality appears variable, it offers opportunities for innovative modeling to help illuminate such issues as the relationship of various activities to numerical growth or decline in membership; the impact of current membership size on numerical growth or decline; and similar factors.

#### ***10.6.6 Founder influence***

Section 3.5 and subsections 3.10.9 and 10.4.5 explain that the influence of the Salvation Army's founder has continued, albeit in a modified form, to current times. The literature on the impact of influence of this kind on churches and even on other nonprofit organizations is limited, although its impact might intuitively be expected to be particularly strong in such cases. This topic merits specific future research, both within and outside the Territory and the Salvation Army.

### ***10.6.7 Followership***

As suggested in subsections 3.10.7 and 10.4.2, the literature search described in subsection 3.9.2 has demonstrated the importance of leadership to the Territory, and section 7.11.5 shows that this view is reflected in the field research. However, the literature review records that Spillane (2006) emphasizes the broader concept of distributed leadership, and Kellermann (2007) is amongst those who stress the importance of followership as an essential component in the assessment of leadership.

Followership was not a subject of the current field research, because the emphasis on influential levers required a focus on the activities of leaders and managers as such. Nevertheless, followership is especially important in the Territory, given the dependence on volunteers; and the covenant-rather-than-contract relationship with officers makes this issue particularly relevant.

A specific study on distributed leadership and on followership within the Territory could be an important and useful contribution both to the organization and to the literature.

### ***10.6.8 Other potential specific studies***

The current research has touched on a wide range of factors, many of which are important to the leadership, management and administration of the Territory. The breadth of sub-topics has meant, however, that most could be only briefly addressed. Additionally, the limited size and non-random nature of the samples has inevitably impacted on reliability, validity, quality and generalizability.

This research may usefully be seen as an agenda-setter to consider more detailed surveys – possibly with a different balance of external/internal responsibility – which could address selected issues in more detail.

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